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Photo: Harvey Fein

Harvey Fein "02-22-09", 2009, concinna burl, copper 19"h x 17"w x 3 1/8"d

Photo: Michael Bauermeister

Michael Bauermeister "Poly-Chrome-Anna", 2009, linden, paint, stain 26"h x 59"w x 3"d

Photo: Iona S. Elliott

Dennis Elliott
"E2233 Gemini", 2005, bigleaf maple burl, stainless steel, copper, blue patina 32 1/4"h x 15" w 12"d

Photo: David Peters

Robert Cutler "Wolf Howl Hunters Song", 2009, spalted birch burl, euclyptus burl, euclyptus, mahogany, moose antler, brass, copper, silver 5 3/8"h x 8 3/4"dia

Photo: Mark Nohl

Harry Pollitt "Chocolate Twist" 2009, spalted walnut, 9"h x 12"dia

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June/July 2009

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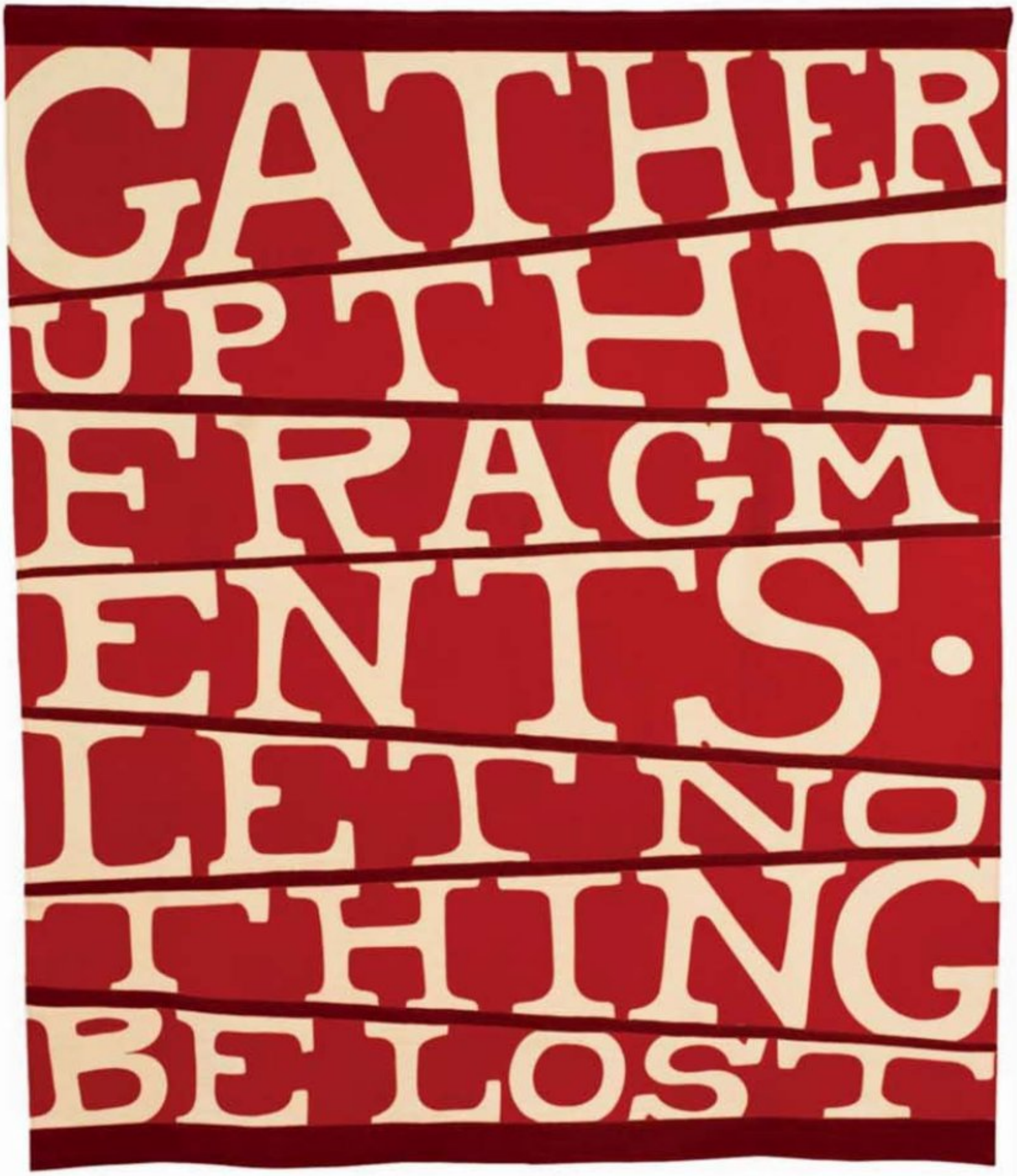
On the Cover: Andy Brayman's Change Dish in his Kansas City studio, photographed by Brady Fontenot.
page 040

Below: Paul Loebach's unique furnishings include the wall hanging Nothing Lost, designed with Jessie Henson.
page 014



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Zoom
We guide you to the best in shows, books, fresh talent and news of the field. In this issue: Paul Loebach's furniture with a twist, Facèré Jewelry Art Gallery, flamework by Eun-Suh Choi and glass sculpture by Michael Taylor.

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Andrea DiNoto explores the modern textile wonders in "Fashioning Felt" at Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum in New York.

056
Critic's Corner
Jayne Merkel surveys five New York City buildings that enabled architects to explore glass the way artists do.

066
The Wide World of Craft
The singular River Walk is only the half of it in arts-friendly San Antonio, Texas. Shannon Sharpe finds the pulse of creativity in this colorful Southwest city.
Photography by Misty Keasler

072
From the Stacks
In the June 1954 *Craft Horizons* Sherley Ashton delved into the early career of master woodworker Sam Maloof. Christine Kaminsky updates us on his subsequent prolific achievements, including a current solo exhibition featuring the skilled veteran's recent designs.

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Masters of Mid-Century California Modernism
Believing in the Bauhaus philosophy of combining fine art, craft and industry to produce quality goods, Jerome and Evelyn Ackerman made "things we could be proud of that people could afford and get pleasure from putting on their walls or tables." Joyce Lovelace illuminates the charmed life, marriage and work of this endearing couple.
Photography by Anne Cusack

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Making the Most of the Margins
Andy Brayman's approach to functionality as exercised through his Matter Factory is a marriage of common sense and prankster plotting. Lily Kane finds out what makes this intriguing artist tick.
Photography by Brady Fontenot

048
Let There Be Lighting
The British ceramic artist Margaret O'Rorke has forged a new path in pursuit of developing freestanding light sculptures that capitalize on the translucency of porcelain, with impressive results that combine the traditional and the modern with lyricism, boldness, ingenuity and a beauty that reveals her own form of magic. Robert Silberman interviews O'Rorke and highlights her remarkable international career.

"I don't want to say I'm devoted to functional pottery because I'm not afraid to do other work, but it is important. And I find the constraints tolerable, even inspiring."—Andy Brayman

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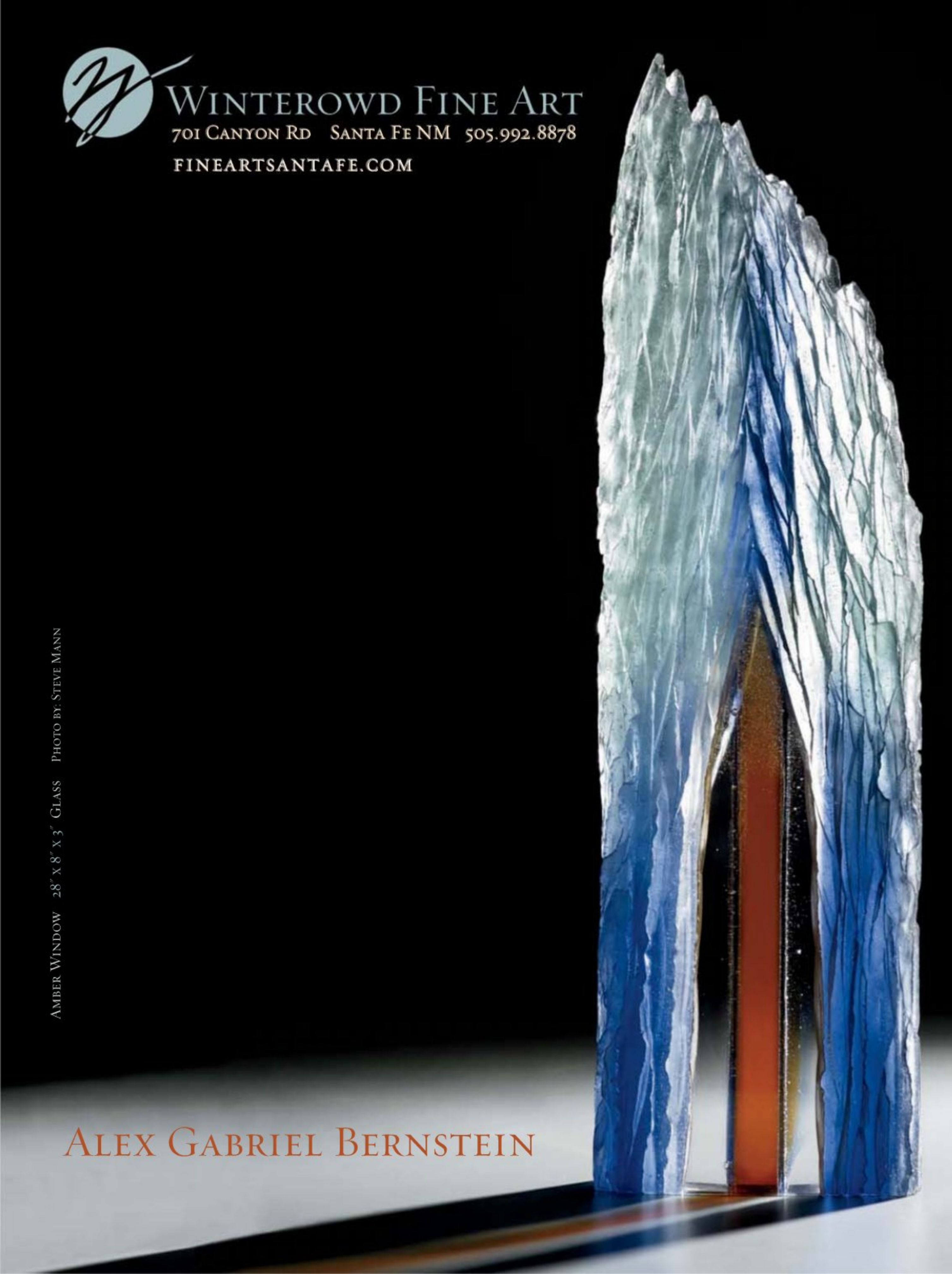
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Contemporary Silversmithing
June 23 – August 8, 2009

Photo: Peter Harris Studio

"Twisted" earrings. Sterling silver, 3.5" long by 5/8" wide. By Melissa Finelli

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Anne Cusack ("Masters of Mid-Century California Modernism," p. 32), a photojournalist, enjoys the entrée her career gives her into people's lives. "The Ackermans were a darling couple to photograph—so affectionate after so many years together. Everywhere you looked in their home were little treasures."

Andrea DiNoto (Reviewed, "Fashioning Felt," p. 30), is a New York-based writer on art, craft and design. "Whether used as a craft-y textile, a moldable 'protoplastic,' or a high-tech industrial material, felt remains a uniquely seductive wool-based medium whose friendly fuzz invites the touch."

Brady Fontenot ("Making the Most of the Margins," p. 40) is a New Orleans-based photographer. "Good Mexican food, an awesome coffee shop next to Andy Brayman's studio and afternoon trips to the skate park made for a fun shoot. Not to mention how chill Andy is. Maybe KC is one of the best-kept secrets in America."

Lily Kane ("Making the Most of the Margins," p. 40), a writer on craft and design, is the director of exhibitions for R 20th-Century, a New York gallery. "I constantly look for ways to encourage people to think about the objects in their lives. Interviewing Andy Brayman reminded me that being articulate about the history of your craft and having a sense of humor make the best approach."

Misty Keasler (Wide World of Craft, p. 66), a native Texan, has been taking pictures since she was seven. Her photographs have been published in *Harper's, Newsweek, Time* and the *New York Times Style Magazine.* She returned from her honeymoon in time to photograph the vibrant craft scene in San Antonio and was blown away by the community within the art scene there.

Jayne Merkel (Critic's Corner, p. 56), is the author of *Eero Saarinen* (2005) and a contributing editor of *Architectural Design/AD* magazine in London. "During the last few years, the glass facades began to change the look of the streets of New York. They not only created new qualities of interior space but also made it possible for architects to explore the craft of architecture using transparency, translucency, color, shape and form."

Andy Reynolds (Shop Talk, p. 20), was educated in audio production and engineering, but found more thrills in exploring the visual mediums. Bringing his own unique vision to life, he provides editorial and commercial imagery for many publications and design firms. "I was impressed with Karen Lorene's diverse collection of very cool jewelry, but the Barbie doll pieces were my faves."

Robert Silberman ("Let There Be Lighting," p. 48) an associate professor of art history at the University of Minnesota, interviewed Margaret O'Rorke during her recent residency as a McKnight Fellow at the Northern Clay Center in Minneapolis. He was impressed by her spirit after she arrived in Minnesota in January, when the temperature did not go above freezing until the very last day. And he was impressed by her "magnificent work." ✚

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from top: Anti-Gravity Table, 1998. New West Furniture. h:33; w:47; d:26 inches. Switchback Ranch Purchase Award. 1.69.5756

Rockabilly Sideboard, 2008. Scott E. Armstrong (1956). h:39; w:71.5; d:18.875 inches. Switchback Ranch Purchase Award. 1.69.6170

Armchair, ca. 1950s, Thomas Molesworth Furniture, black leather cushions wit Chimayo faces, fir pole legs, and exposed frame. Photo: Elijah Cobb

Sweetwater Jacket and Skirt, 2008. Jan Faulkner (1941). Dolores Snyder Purchase Award. 1.69.6171, .2. Photo: Elijah Cobb

What's on Your Mind?

Kathryn Pannepacker and the *Wall of Rugs* on our April/May cover.

Urban Fabric
I thoroughly enjoyed your most recent cover story, "Urban Fabric" (April/May). It is refreshing to see an artist producing work that not only pushes the edges of creativity (how cool to mix textile and wall mural art) but also incorporates an intention to create space for tolerance, understanding and appreciation of different cultures and points of view. This is art that creates real change in the fabric of society and it doesn't get any better than that! Thanks for such an inspiring piece!
KILKENNY TREMBLAY
Atlanta, Georgia

It's understandable that people like Kathryn Pannepacker's fence paintings ("Urban Fabric," April/May), but I would have rather read a discussion about the rugs themselves instead of their painterly reproduction. The subject and her work are newsworthy but not worth the attention you gave them.

There are many wonderful public art works created by craftspeople and many more underway. I like your coverage of process, which I hope will continue. Craft seems to be becoming more precious, less relevant to its tradition and role in the arts. In the 70s there was the great Artmobile exhibit "Fiber, Fabric and Form." Arkansas is a cotton state and part of the idea was to encourage people to think about the relationship between the three elements. We had a weaver who took looms into the classroom and an exhibit which included work by Lia Cook and Ed Rossbach. Surely someone is still working with the real stuff.

For the past seven years a group called Friends of Contemporary Craft at the Arkansas Arts Center has sponsored "conversations" with craftspeople. Toshiko Takaezu was one of many distinguished artists who conversed with attendees. FOCC provides opportunities for people to meet artists and learn about their work. Some FOCC members have developed collections. The upcoming conversation is with Warren MacKenzie. Bet there are other groups making a difference for the craft artist and audiences, too.
JUNE FREEMAN
Little Rock, Arkansas

Editors' Note: We saw Kathryn Pannepacker's work as a project that perfectly fit our theme—taking the inside out, with the intention of enlightening a public who might not otherwise have access to such work. As you suggest, there are certainly others doing similar things—like the excellent ArtStream (artstream.com), for instance—but Pannepacker's work really struck us as incredibly timely.

Thanks for the Memory
I recently was given your latest issue and was inspired by the article on Gyöngy Laky ("Constructing the Unexpected," April/May). Reading it reminded me of a wonderful experience I had when I was in high school in Tennessee. Our school commissioned the artist Patrick Dougherty to do an installation. I and a couple of other art students had the rare opportunity to be his assistants! I was so happy to be reminded of the experience that I wrote to Mr. Dougherty and received an e-mail response with a very nice note and a link to a video of one of his installations in France. Just wanted to share how happy your magazine made me this week.
ALLAN PRICE REDD
New York, New York

Questionable Materials
After a fabulous Friday surrounded by the gorgeous crafts in Marlborough, Massachusetts, at the Paradise City Arts Fair, it was a disappointing contrast to peruse your April/May issue of American Craft, once my favorite magazine–between "In Praise of Poop" and "Jennifer Angus and the Insect Kingdom" about the only attractive pages were the ads. What were you thinking?
LUCIA KIMBALL
Swansea, Massachusetts

I have been a subscriber to American Craft for many years as an art teacher and ceramist but will not be renewing once this subscription expires. I feel the magazine does not showcase the quality of art and craft I have come to expect through the years, the article "In Praise of Poop" being a prime example. I will gladly continue to support craft makers but not through your magazine.
SHARON BARETTE
Cortlandt Manor, New York

Editors' Note: In regard to our "In Praise of Poop" article, featuring the horse dung work of Virginia Gardiner, our Material Culture section is always intended to take a look at innovative approaches to materials. This is a new and provocative use of a material that most people never think twice about, and it is our hope that it will encourage others to consider other overlooked material in a productive way. Rethinking of material use is obviously a hugely relevant matter to our society, and we believe Gardiner's work demonstrates a thorough understanding of this. While we can certainly understand your distaste for the work, we stand by our belief that it is important to consider it.

Correction:
In "Jennifer Angus and the Insect Kingdom" (April/May) the breakage rate in Angus's collecting of insect specimens was mistakenly reported as 50 percent. The number should have been five percent. We regret the error.

Addition
In "Urban Fabric" (April/May), we regret that the names of Kathryn Pannepacker's assistants in her mural project were omitted. For *Wall of Rugs #1,* she was assisted by Michael Schwartz, Angela Crafton and Theodore Harris. Rosemarie Haley assisted her on *Wall of Rugs #2*.

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PHOTO: G. HANCOCK
Jessica Loughlin, *Shifting Layers*, 2009, kilnformed glass
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Fully Functional

By Andrew Wagner

Photography by Brady Fontenot

In the February 2009 issue of *Metropolis*, Marcel Wanders, the Dutch designer perhaps best known for his Knotted Chair for Droog, was asked what he found overrated. His answer was simply "function." This sentiment seems to be a direct echo from the early days of the American studio craft movement, when *Craft Horizons* editor Rose Slivka set off a firestorm with her controversial article "The New Ceramics," in 1961 (visit americancraftmag.org to read the article).

While there is certainly a part of me that fervently agrees with Wanders and Slivka, another part of me can't help feeling that as function has fallen farther by the wayside in recent years, craft and design have lost something special. Function hasn't disappeared from either discipline, it's just a bit like the bookish older sister who looks down-and-out next to her sparkling younger sibling. Still, this has never deterred me from loving function.

In the waning winter months, when this issue was first germinating, I often found my mind drifting toward functional thoughts as my mornings more often than not were spent slowly sipping piping hot coffee from a mug with which I'm rather obsessed. This particular mug was made by ceramist Andy Brayman and picked up at Santa Fe Clay in 2007. A morning without this mug is a time of mourning. While I'll spare you any sentimental tangents about the way it feels in my hand (amazing) or how it continually shines on the counter (it does) and miraculously draws me to it each morning (true story), I will simply say that it is a fantastic piece by a truly talented maker that prompts me to believe in the ingenuity and fun that (almost) pure function can deliver on an everyday basis.

Brayman was a speaker at the American Craft Council's "Shaping the Future of Craft" conference in 2006, and we've kept our eyes on what he's been up to ever since. This issue, which seeks to examine the role of function, seems like the perfect place to highlight the work he has been doing lately in collaboration with other makers under the name The Matter Factory ("Making the Most of the Margins," page 40). We also saw this as an opportunity to focus our attention on the remarkable work in porcelain lighting that Margaret O'Rorke has been undertaking lately ("Let There Be Lighting," page 48) and, of course, to recognize the under-recognized but incredibly inspiring output that Jerome and Evelyn Ackerman have been gracing the world with for decades ("Masters of Mid-Century California Modernism," page 32).

The work throughout this issue is sure to make any function junkies–or mere function appreciators–want to surround themselves with the wonder that a chair, vase, a sofa, a desk, plates, silverware, lighting or, for that matter, a simple mug can bring about. I know it did for me. ✚

"I like that craft and function are sort of outside the 'upper echelon.' There's a lot of freedom in that."—Andy Brayman

Andy Brayman's Gold-Lined Cup with Concealed Decoration, {h. $2\frac{1}{5}$ in, w. 4 in, l. 4 in}.

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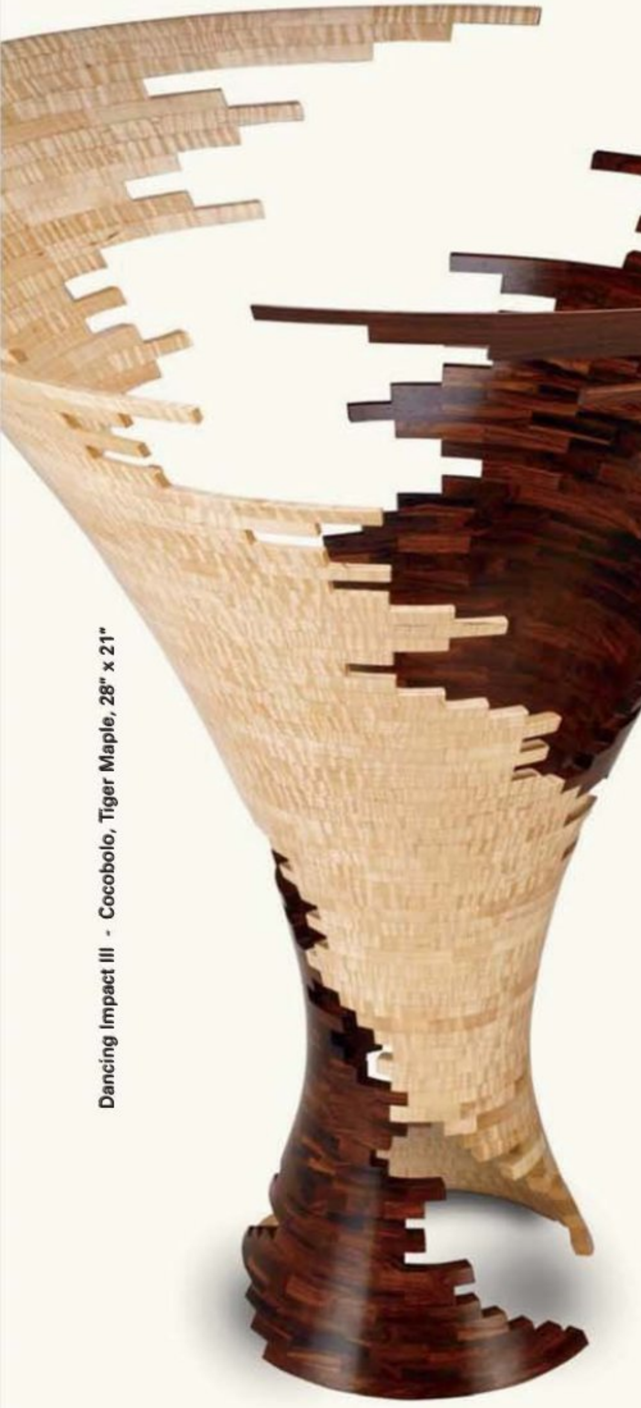

Dancing Impact III - Cocobolo, Tiger Maple, 28" x 21"

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An up close guide to books, galleries, people & places

1

Product Placement
Paul Loebach

"I was searching for an industrial wasteland," says furniture designer Paul Loebach on why he moved into a former knitting factory in Bedford-Stuyvesant, a gritty neighborhood in Brooklyn, New York. "I loved this place. It's dark and empty. The area's a bit of a no-man's-land."

It's from this apartment/studio–where designs hang on the walls, books overflow off the bookshelves and his experiments with various materials cover the floor and any other available work space–that Loebach designs pieces that many said would be impossible. "People tell me I can't do something and then I do it. I'll be like, 'I know what you're saying but I'm going to ignore it,'" he explains. "You have to understand the basic principles of design and then mess with them."

Loebach's exposure to design came early in life. He is descended from a family of German woodworkers. "My dad taught me woodworking–that was our manly thing we did together," he says, laughing. "I was seven years old and running a joiner!" Always suspecting he'd be an artist, he solidified his interest in art and design during an extended trip to France, where he lived with his parents' friends. He went on to attend University of Cincinnati and discovered industrial design. "Even though my family were craftsmen and my dad was an engineer, I had no idea that design existed as a career," Loebach says. "Nor did anyone else." But after a year at the university, Loebach left. "The program was too regimented, and I'm not a big compromiser. Industrial design, yes. I just needed to figure out how to do it."

Loebach went to Colorado and then a friend studying at Rhode Island School of Design called and said "I'm at RISD. You'd like it." He was right. RISD's combination of practicality and creativity was what Loebach wanted, a synthesis reflected in his recent designs ❶. Referring to the process as "aesthetic athleticism," Loebach gives traditional styles a new twist through such technology as rapid metal printing and computer-controlled machinery. "I'm exploring how to push the limits of new manufacturing processes, traditional materials and the interplay of form and space," he says.

Pushing the limits has sparked Loebach's interest in what the future offers with technology and society. "To do something new you often need to use a new technology because everything else has been explored," he explains. "What's new in people's lives and our culture makes that exploration worthwhile. I try to have an awareness of what's going on now and translate that through my work. I'm trying to make things that are relevant to our time."—**S.S.**

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paulloebach.com

Hot Spots
Eye Candy

Gallery shows, listed A–Z by state. View complete calendar: americancraftmag.org

AZ / Mesa
Mesa Arts Center:
Androgyny: New Work by Sergei Isupov
to Aug. 2
mesaartscenter.org
Isupov's large ceramic heads, visually arresting and emotionally alarming, evoke the tragic characters of a Dostoevsky novel.

CA / San Jose
San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles:
Connections: Small Tapestry International
to July 26
sjquiltmuseum.org
Textile artists expand their horizons while shrinking dimensions, connecting technique and concept in riveting new work.

CT / Guilford
Guilford Art Center:
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guilfordartcenter.org
Visitors from near and far flock year after year to one of the most anticipated events of the region to discover and rediscover the importance of American handmade objects.

DC / Washington
Smithsonian American Art Museum:
Jean Shin: Common Threads
to July 26
americanart.si.edu
Another's trash is Shin's treasure as she breathes new life into the castoffs of consumer society, using them to create striking large-scale installations.

❶

Preview

Structures of Light

Memorial Art Gallery
A Unity of Opposites: Recent Work by Michael Taylor
Rochester, New York
April 19 – June 28, 2009
mag.rochester.edu

Any doubts about the possibility of a fruitful synergy between art and science, would certainly be set aside as one contemplated the dozen glass sculptures by Michael Taylor on view at the Memorial Art Gallery. These include monumental works composed of hundreds of individual pieces, along with prints and maquettes, and represent the culmination of 40 years of investigating light, form and design through glass. A pioneer of studio glass who entered the field in the late 1960s from ceramics—he encountered Dominck Labino and Harvey Littleton at the Toledo Museum School Glass Workshop in 1970—Taylor taught for more than 30 years, 20 of them as head glass at the Rochester Institute of Technology, retiring in 2000. He built his career and international reputation by perfecting a cold-working process applied to optical glass. This technically demanding process allows him to consider multiple variables and make artistic decisions at a more controlled pace than is possible at the hot-worker's furnace.

Taylor's signature forms are shard-like blocks of laminated cast glass in luminous colors, placed against each other in asymmetrical arrangements. Taylor approaches each component independently, then as part of an organic whole. He uses the grinding wheel to shape and polish individual blocks of colored and clear glass, which are then laminated together with a two-part epoxy resin, and the resulting forms paired or arranged in endless combinations and variations of color, light and shape. The critic Robert C. Morgan in *Michael Taylor: A Geometry of Meaning,* a 2006 monograph, has pointed out the artist's affinities with Russian Constructivist works of the early 20th century.

In the same book, the glass specialist Tina Oldknow notes that though Taylor's medium, cut, optical glass, can seem cold and unforgiving, he "gives it warmth with colors that radiate and reflect from the central core of each of his sculptures." She further suggests that his works rather than originating from a mathematical base or theoretical bent "are solidly based in the natural world." But this is clearly an artist drawn to mathematics and science—consider such titles as the glass and steel *Meditative Algorithms* (detail) ❶. "The symbolism used in the abstract imagery of my work consciously resembles contemporary scientific language such as the structure of the binary code and DNA profiling diagrams, powerfully influential subjects that have changed the course of humanity and been as revolutionary to our culture as the automobile and the airplane were to my grandfather," Taylor wrote in that monograph. Yet he also makes clear his attraction to other arts, noting that his forms "closely resemble the structure of literary forms, storytelling, musical composition or poetry." He hopes to "foster an association between the abstract elements of my work and abstract elements of specialized study in art and science." To him, the most visible aspect of this association is "the sequencing and repetition of planar components."—B.S.

The 40-page catalog is $25.

IL / Elmhurst
Elmhurst Art Museum:
Stacza Lipinski: Broadcast
to July 26
elmhurstartmuseum.org
Dense, organic forms of intricately cut paper mimic the invasive yet beautiful growth of ivy on brick buildings.

IN / Indianapolis
❶ **Artifacts Gallery:**
Lydia Gerbig-Fast: Classical Obsessions
to June 21
artifactsindy.com
The classics live on in Gerbig-Fast's vibrant, sensuous jewelry that reinterprets ancient works in collections in the Washington, D.C., area.

KS / Wichita
Wichita Art Museum:
Innovation and Change: Great Ceramics from the Ceramics Research Center
to June 28
wichitaartmuseum.org
A touring exhibition of 79 pieces from the Arizona State University Art Museum offers a panoramic survey of clay's potential as an expressive art form.

MD / Baltimore
Baltimore Clayworks:
Yoshi Fujii: Lorima Salter Fellowship Exhibition
June 27–Aug. 1
baltimoreclayworks.org
Fujii's exquisitely carved porcelain seduces with opulent, decadent lusters.

❶

JOSH SIMPSON CORONA PLATTER

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805-646-7133 **www.primaveraart.com**

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TURNING POINT GALLERY
34 West State Street, Media, PA 19063
610-566-9474 **www.turningpointgallery2.com**

Shop Talk
Standing for Jewelry Arts

Facèré Jewelry Art Gallery
1420 Fifth Avenue, #108
Seattle, Washington 98101
206-624-6768

Karen Lorene ❷ launched her career as a dealer in 1972, selling "turn-of-the-century furnishings and doodads" on her front porch. Twelve years later, she opened the elegant Facèré Jewelry Art Gallery in downtown Seattle. "I still can hardly wait to get here every day," Lorene says of Facèré (pronounced fa-CHERRY, it's a made-up name, she cheerfully admits, meant to evoke handwork and sophistication). The gallery is itself jewel-like, a 250-square-foot freestanding space in the lobby of the City Centre building, offering vintage pieces as well as contemporary work, such as Margaux Lange's *Giggles* bracelet ❶ made from silver and deconstructed Barbie dolls, by 55 leading and emerging makers.

A published writer, Lorene is working on a personal history (completed chapters are on the Facèré website) that tells the story of her evolution from Chicago schoolteacher to antiques shop owner to noted jewelry authority (she was a guest appraiser on the popular PBS series *Antiques Roadshow*), and recalls the ups and downs of building a small business.

In your memoir, you come across as part romantic idealist, part practical business person. A perfect combination for an art dealer?
Yes, because so much of what you do is create friendships—with the artists, and with your client base, friends you turn on to this very small world of jewelry art. I think jewelry art is where glass art was 20 years ago. People are just becoming aware. Some have been aware; it isn't like this is a new field. But many come in and say, "Do people really wear this stuff?"

Still?
Still! Every time I go to the theater, I check out how many women are wearing interesting jewelry. If I find one in the crowd, that's a miracle. But here's the big change. If I go to an art event, it's competitive: who's wearing the most exciting jewelry? That's just come about in the last 10 years in Seattle.

With jewelry, you're with your art wherever you go. People will touch it. And you have to like that interchange. It's saying, "I stand for this form of art. This is part of who I am."

> "With jewelry, you're with your art wherever you go. People will touch it. And you have to like that interchange."—Karen Lorene

Do you wear a lot of jewelry?
I wear jewelry even when I go to the grocery store. Two jewelers came into the gallery yesterday. I said to them, "And where is your jewelry?" If they don't wear it, why would they expect anyone else to wear it?

You had two Facèré stores for a little while.
We started with antique jewelry and grew into jewelry art. I thought, great, I'll have two locations, one for each. Well, I now have them together, and I'm very comfortable with that, because I think it's important that the artists see where their roots are. For years the sale of antique jewelry allowed me to show jewelry art. Then slowly it became fifty-fifty. Now I sell 30 percent antique, and 60 percent jewelry art. But it's taken all these years to build that base of people who love jewelry art.

How does your knowledge of antiques inform your approach to contemporary work?
It makes you aware of craft. It's important that the artists we show really have the craft in their fingers. Almost everyone we represent is a metalsmith, except for perhaps three who work in glass.

Victorian jewelry was brilliant about convertibles—like a bracelet that would become a tiara, that would come apart and become earrings. I encourage artists to think about different ways to wear their work. From my side of the counter, to be able to tell a customer "you can wear this as either a brooch or a necklace" is a selling point.

Wasn't Kurt Cobain one of your customers?
I wasn't there that day, but he came in with his hair all purple and spiky, and purchased the most delicate piece of Edwardian platinum jewelry for Courtney Love's engagement ring. Not edgy at all. The most traditional, fine piece of jewelry you would ever want to have. —J.L.

Gimme More!
facerejewelryart.com

Contemporary Craft Galleries

Adela Akers at Hibberd McGrath Gallery

Hibberd McGrath Gallery

101 N. Main Street, PO Box 7638, Breckenridge, Colorado 80424
(970) 453-6391 • www.hibberdmcgrath.com

L'Attitude Gallery

218 Newbury Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116
(617) 927-4400 • www.lattitudegallery.com

Obsidian Gallery

4320 N. Campbell Avenue, #130, Tucson, Arizona 85718
(520) 577-3598 • www.obsidian-gallery.com

Vermont Artisan Designs & Gallery 2

106 Main Street, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301
(802) 257-7044 • www.BuyVermontArt.com

Vessels Gallery

8 Union Park Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02118
(617) 424-6700 • www.vesselsgallery.com

Weyrich Gallery/The Rare Vision Art Galerie

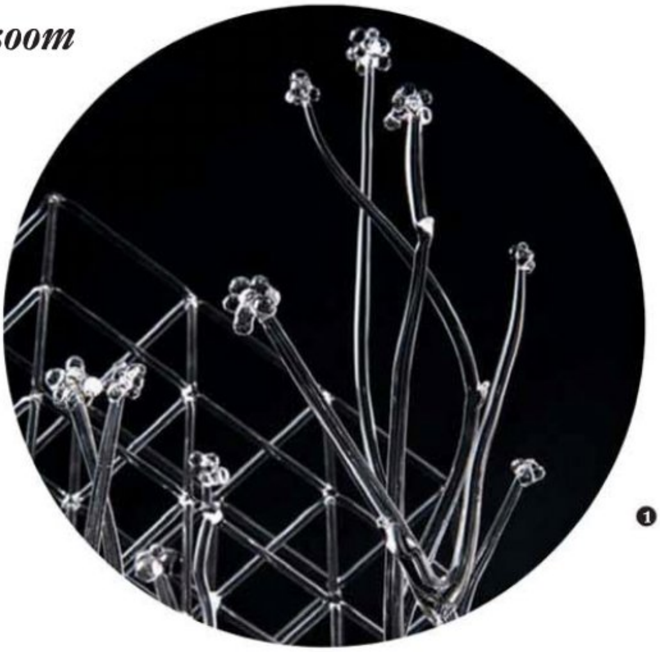
2935-D Louisiana N.E., Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110
(505) 883-7410 • www.weyrichgallery.com

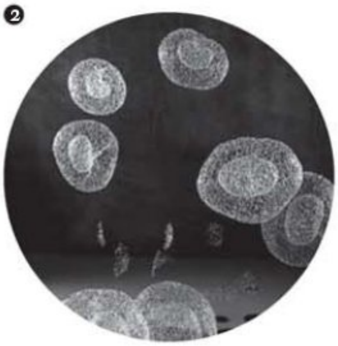
White Bird Gallery

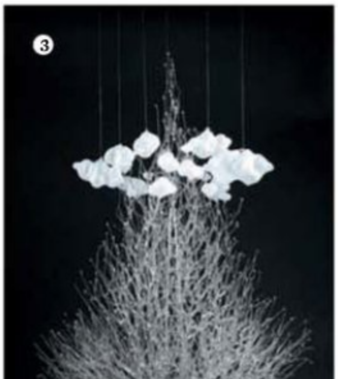
Box 502 N. Hemlock Street, Cannon Beach, Oregon 97110
(503) 436-2681 • www.whitebirdgallery.com

Susan Madacsi at Obsidian Gallery

T. Breeze VerDant at Vermont Artisan Designs







Radar
Flamework

The ebb and flow of human experience–above all, our natural yearning to rise above limitations and achieve a dream–inspires the intricate and ambitious flameworked glass sculptures of Eun-Suh Choi.

"We all desire something better for ourselves. This interest came from the new perspective I had on myself when I came to the U.S.," says the 32-year-old, who moved from her native Korea to upstate New York in 2004 to get her master's degree in glass at the Rochester Institute of Technology. At first alone and sometimes lonely in a new culture, Choi immersed herself in the studio, delving deep within to create a series of labor-intensive constructions on the theme of aspiration.

Images of ladders, steps and clouds abound in these works, which range from 18 inches to 10 feet tall, and bear titles like *Reincarnation* ❷ and *Stairway to Heaven.* Another recurring motif is the tree, as in *Progression 1* and *Dreaming* ❸, which Choi sees as having human qualities–"it lives, breaths, grows and dies." *Double Conscious* ❶, featured in the "Searchlight" section of the American Craft Council Baltimore Craft Show, depicts a three-part sequence of momentum: a stirring, rising up to push a barrier, then breakthrough and transcendence. "I tried to create a physical representation of what it feels like to have a moment of liberation," Choi says. "The moment feels sacred."

Choi has overcome her share of obstacles, starting at the tender age of one, when she dipped both hands into boiling water. The accident necessitated four skin-graft surgeries, and compelled her to find ways to compensate for a slight lack of facility with her right hand. She idolized the Korean fashion designer Andre Kim, and envisioned a career in fashion as "my destiny." She attended several universities in Seoul, first majoring in textile design. When she applied to a advanced textiles program and was offered a place in glass instead, she almost turned it down. "My father said, 'Why don't you try it? You might like it.'"

Choi took her father's advice, got past her fears, and was soon exploring the expressive possibilities of lampwork, the technique of manipulating glass tubes with a torch. Her thesis project was a defining series of sculptures called Reincarnation, inspired by Buddhist philosophy and the idea that human life is like water–constantly changing, sometimes turbulent, other times calm.

Since coming to America, her own life has been about a single-minded focus on her art. Though she misses friends and family in Korea, Choi is determined to succeed in her adopted country. "I have a dream," she says, "and I think I can dream here."—J.L.

Gimme More!
choiglass.com

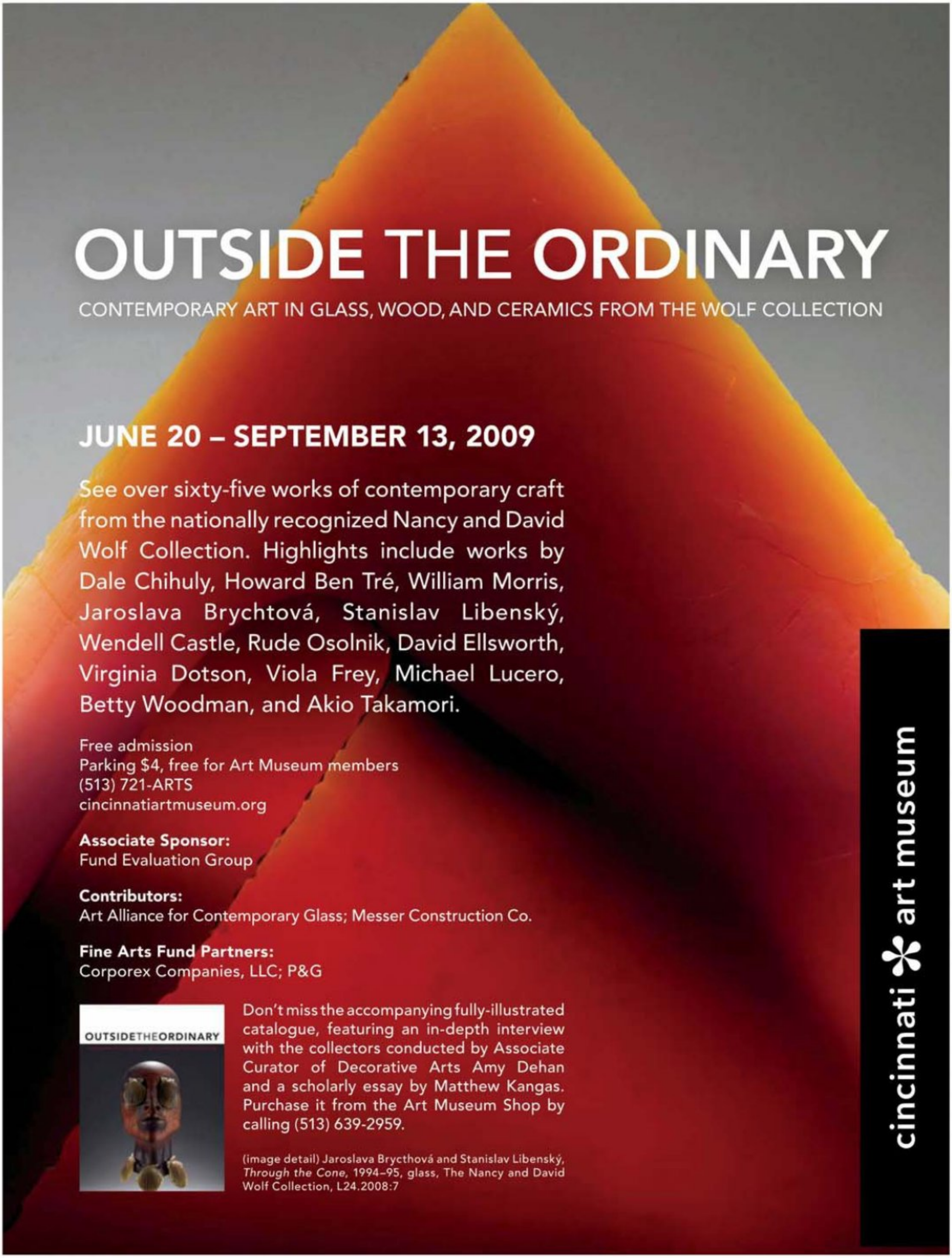
MA / Boston
❷ Society of Arts and Crafts:
American Enamels
to July 26
societyofcrafts.org
This tribute to enameling, showcases work by diverse artists such as Kate Bauman's From the Silhouette series.

MN / St. Paul
American Association of Woodturners Gallery:
CODAchrome: A Snapshot of Craft in America
to Aug. 7
galleryofwoodart.org
Remarkable works by members of the Craft Organization Development Association.

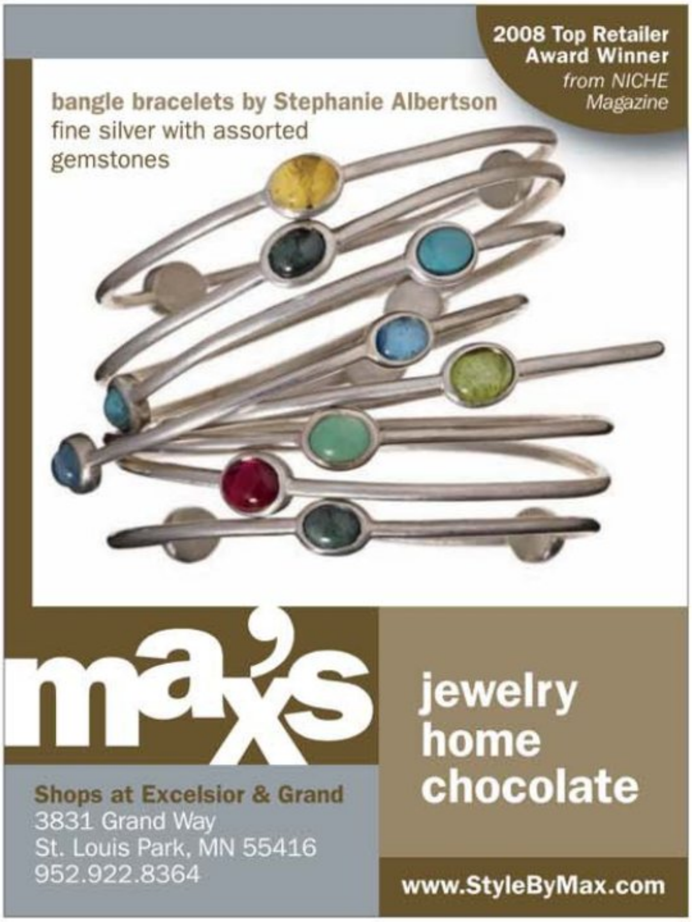
MO / Columbia
Columbia Art League:
Short Stories: Narratives from the Kiln
June 20–Aug. 1
cal.missouri.org
Artist embed personal histories within glass, creating a unique visual vocabulary.

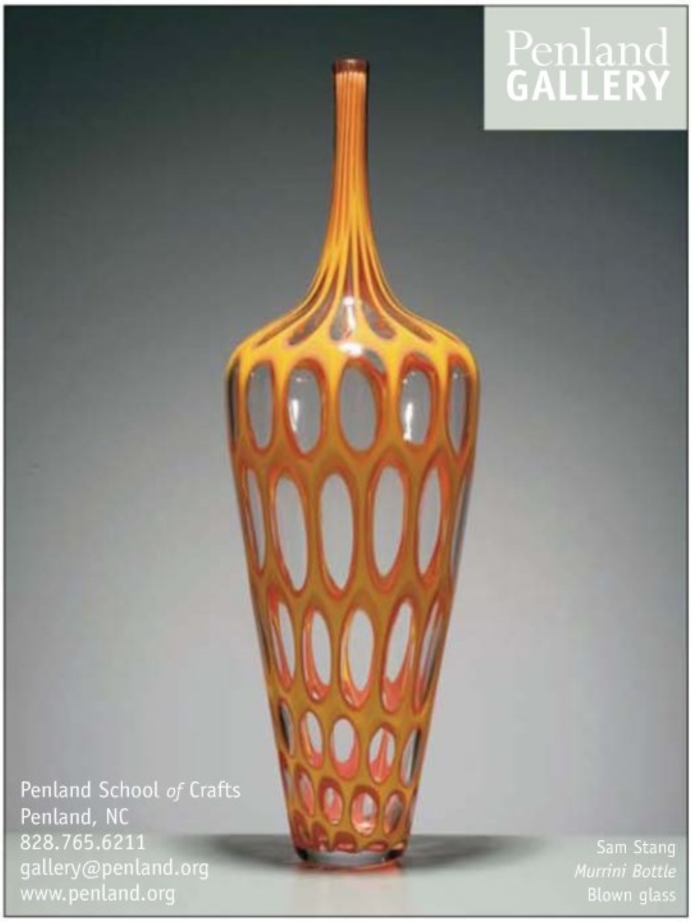
MO / Kansas City
Byron C. Cohen Gallery:
On the Curve: Regina Benson
to July 11
byroncohengallery.com
Benson's textiles undulate in concert with nature.

MT / Red Lodge
Red Lodge Clay Center:
Butter
June 5–30
redlodgeclaycenter.com
Ceramics are linked either through use, storage or narrative to this high-fat substance without the health risk.



(image detail) Jaroslava Brycthová and Stanislav Libenský, *Through the Cone*, 1994–95, glass, The Nancy and David Wolf Collection, L24.2008:7





Books

Grand Opera

Jun Kaneko - Fidelio / Leonore
Texts by Arthur Danto, Eric Schwitzgebel, Michael C. Tusa, Robert B. Driver, Jun Kaneko
Jun Kaneko Studio
Omaha, Nebraska
$50
junkaneko.com or thekaneko.org

The Japanese-born, Omaha, Nebraska-based artist Jun Kaneko ❶, is known internationally for his monumental ceramic sculptures and many public commissions, all notable for their daunting scale, minimalist style and bold use of color. There is hardly an impediment to his reach into new areas. In 2006 he designed the sets and costumes ❷ for the Omaha Opera Company's *Madama Butterfly*. When this came to the attention of Robert B. Driver, the director of the Opera Company of Philadelphia, he was so impressed he proposed that Kaneko, undertake the designs for a new *Fidelio*, Beethoven's only opera. Though at first reluctant, Kaneko soon immersed himself in the music and story. The project came to fruition in October 2008, when *Fidelio* was performed with Kaneko's sets, costumes, video projections and lighting.

This book is a vivid visual record of the project that draws the reader into the process of opera production, showing through aptly juxtaposed drawings and photographs how the artist develops his ideas in collaboration with others. It is also a lively primer on *Fidelio,* with several essays about the opera, its history as

a 10-year struggle and triumph for Beethoven, and its themes–the power of conjugal love and the fight for liberty.

More than one of the contributors note the aptness of Kaneko's signature style to expressing the subject of the opera, even one so far away in time and place. "Everything about his work resonated *Fidelio* to me," says Driver, "from his huge sculptural heads, to his acrylic paintings on canvas with straight and swirling black and white lines, to his tile walls with splashes of black and white together with geometric blocks of color. To me the enormous heads evoked a sense of power and serenity central to Beethoven's work. The grid works in his paintings and ceramics brought a fresh new abstract realization on the theme of imprisonment." Philosopher and critic Arthur Danto praises Kaneko's visual conception for its universality. "The miracle of Kaneko's design is that he has found an architectural metaphor for the duality of good and evil." —B.S.

Buriki Photo/Tadaaki Nakagawa.

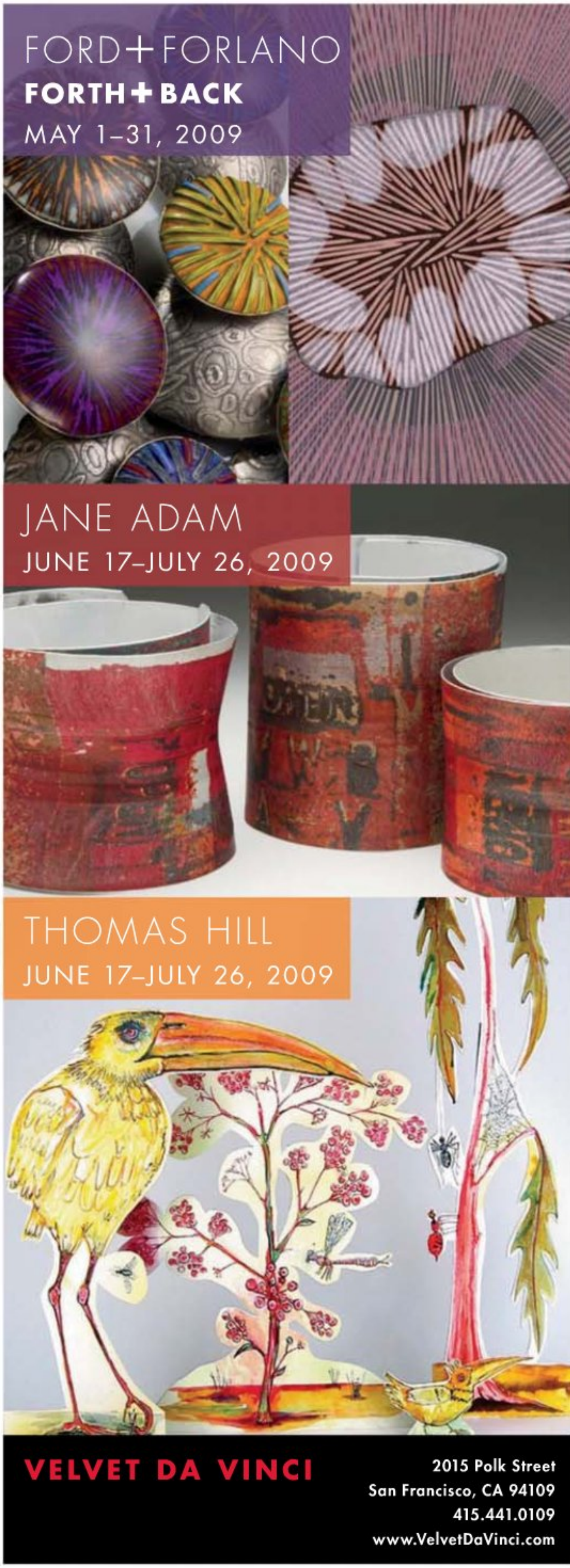
NM / Santa Fe
Patina Gallery:
Pat Flynn: Ironic Attachment II
June 5–July 5
patina-gallery.com
Flynn combines disparate materials into striking jewelry and vessels.

NY / New York
❸ Japan Society:
Buriki: Japanese Tin Toys from the Golden Age of the American Automobile, The Yoku Tanaka Collection
July 9–Aug. 16
japansociety.org
Toy designers replicated U.S. auto styling trends during the postwar boom, including *General Motors's Chevrolet Corvette Stingray,* spawning their own automotive industry–in miniature.

NY / New York
Metropolitan Museum of Art:
Art of the Korean Renaissance, 1400-1600
to June 21
metmuseum.org
A diverse yet cohesive body of work illustrates the height of artistic production during the Choson dynasty, a time of extraordinary cultural achievements.

NY / New York
Museum of Arts and Design:
Object Factory: The Art of Industrial Ceramics
to Sept. 13
madmuseum.org
A groundbreaking exhibition documents current innovation in industrial ceramic production and the renaissance of ceramics in art and design today.

❸



NC / Asheville
❹ **Bender Gallery:**
Carole Perry: Tapestries in Glass
to June 30
thebendergallery.com
Color-saturatedm delicately fringed "tapestries," such as *Carman's Opening Number,* invite the viewer's touch.

OK / Oklahoma City
Individual Artists of Oklahoma:
Fiberworks 2009
June 13–July 3
fiberartistsok.org
Give a nod to Okies, not necessarily from Wiscokie, as they present eclectic new threads in this annual juried exhibition.

OR / Portland
Bullseye Gallery
Jessica Loughlin
June 30–Aug. 8
bullseyegallery.com
Enjoy a moment of serenity gazing upon the layered abstractions of Loughlin's glass works.

PA / Philadelphia
Wexler Gallery:
Myra Mimlitsch-Gray: Anti/icono/clastic
to June 27
wexlergallery.com
Experimental metalsmith and sculptor Mimlitsch-Gray explores the evolution of artifacts from utilitarian object to social image in this retrospective.

TX / Houston
Houston Center for Contemporary Craft:
Literally Figurative
Apr. 4–July 3
crafthouston.org
Artists present individual expressions of a universal form—the human figure.

People & Places
Bulletins from the Field

Winners
The potters **Cynthia Bringle** and **Norm Schulman** ❶, both longtime teachers at the Penland School of Crafts, were hailed as "North Carolina Living Treasures" by the University of North Carolina Wilmington in a ceremony held at its Museum of World Cultures on January 23… **Joh Ricci,** a basket maker, is one of six recipients of Pennsylvania Council on the Arts 2009 Fellowship Grants in the crafts category, along with ceramist **Sumi Maeshima,** metalsmith **Susan Myers,** and glass artists, **Ron Desmett, Jon Clark** and **Daniel Cutrone… C. Matthew Szösz** of Oakland, California, is the winner of the **Jutta Cuny-Franz** Memorial Award, given every two years to a glass artist aged 40 or younger in honor of the German glass sculptor. Administered by the Glass Museum Hentrich in Düsseldorf, the competition drew 191 entries from 33 countries. New work by Szösz, including *Untitled (Inflatable) No. 33* ❷, along with glass by Caitlin Johnston, will be at the **Turtle Gallery** in Deer Isle, Maine (August 2-22).

Passings
The silversmith **Michel Royston,** known for her elegant jewelry and flatware, died December 4 in Redding, California, after a two-year battle with cancer. She was 61. "I love metal," she wrote on her website. "I love the way the light hits it, revealing what has happened to it. Each time I pick up a hammer, hit the metal and watch it moving to my blow, I am intrigued again. It is direct cause and effect. I call it grace through violence."… **Paul G. Mathews,** 90, a master shoemaker and proprietor of the **Cordwainer Gallery of Fine Crafts** in Bedford, New Hampshire, died›

An open air marketplace featuring a curated selection of skillfully crafted products presented in a series of large tents within Socrates Sculpture Park's spring exhibition of outdoor sculptural installations.

Preview event:
Friday, June 26, 6 pm–8 pm / $50
RAIN OR SHINE
Be among the first to shop the Makers Market and enjoy cocktails by St. Germain and hors d'oeuvres on the waterfront as the sun sets over the Manhattan skyline.

Saturday, June 27, 11 am–7 pm
Sunday, June 28, 11 am–5 pm
RAIN OR SHINE

www.socratessculpturepark.org

Presented by American Craft, The Noguchi Museum, R 20th Century and Socrates Sculpture Park

Socrates Sculpture Park
32-01 Vernon Blvd
at Broadway
Long Island City
NY 11106
718-956-1819

Participants include:
Andrea Corson
Atlas Industries
Batle Studio
Circle A Cycles
Daniel Michalik/DMFD Stud
Eric Bonnin Ceramics
Eric Silva
Esque Studio
Garnish by Kara Hamilton
Gratz Industries
Hope Ginsberg, *Sponge*: Felt
Judith Trezza
Kitty Jones
Neil Hadlock
Patrick Weder Design Inc.
Platform
Sanam Emami
Satomi Kawakita Jewelry
Shelton Studios
Spring design&art
Teroforma
Walt Siegl Builder

MAKERS MARKET

Socrates Sculpture Park

american craft
socrates sculpture park
city of new york parks & recreation
the noguchi museum
ST-GERMAIN

❸

❹

❺

February 3 after a brief illness. Mathews started making shoes in his father's shop as a teenager, and earned a reputation for the beauty and extraordinary comfort of his footwear.

Spaces
Baskets by **John McQueen** and glass by **Michael Janis** (through June 13) inaugurate the new and expanded home of **Duane Reed Gallery** in the Central West End of St. Louis (duanereedgallery.com)… The **Museum of Arts and Design** has opened a Design and Innovation Gallery, currently featuring furniture by **Gord Peteran** (through July 26, madmuseum.org).

Kid Stuff
"Back to School With **Therman Statom**," at the **Racine Art Museum** in Wisconsin (June 6-July 26), presents art made in workshops led by the noted glass sculptor for 200 kids at elementary, middle and high schools in the city (ramart.org)… Pittsburgh schoolchildren were among those who collaborated with artist **Daviea Davis** to create a 360-degree glass mosaic panorama ❻ celebrating the city's neighborhoods, on view at the **Pittsburgh Glass Center** through June 14, pittsburghglasscenter.org.

❻

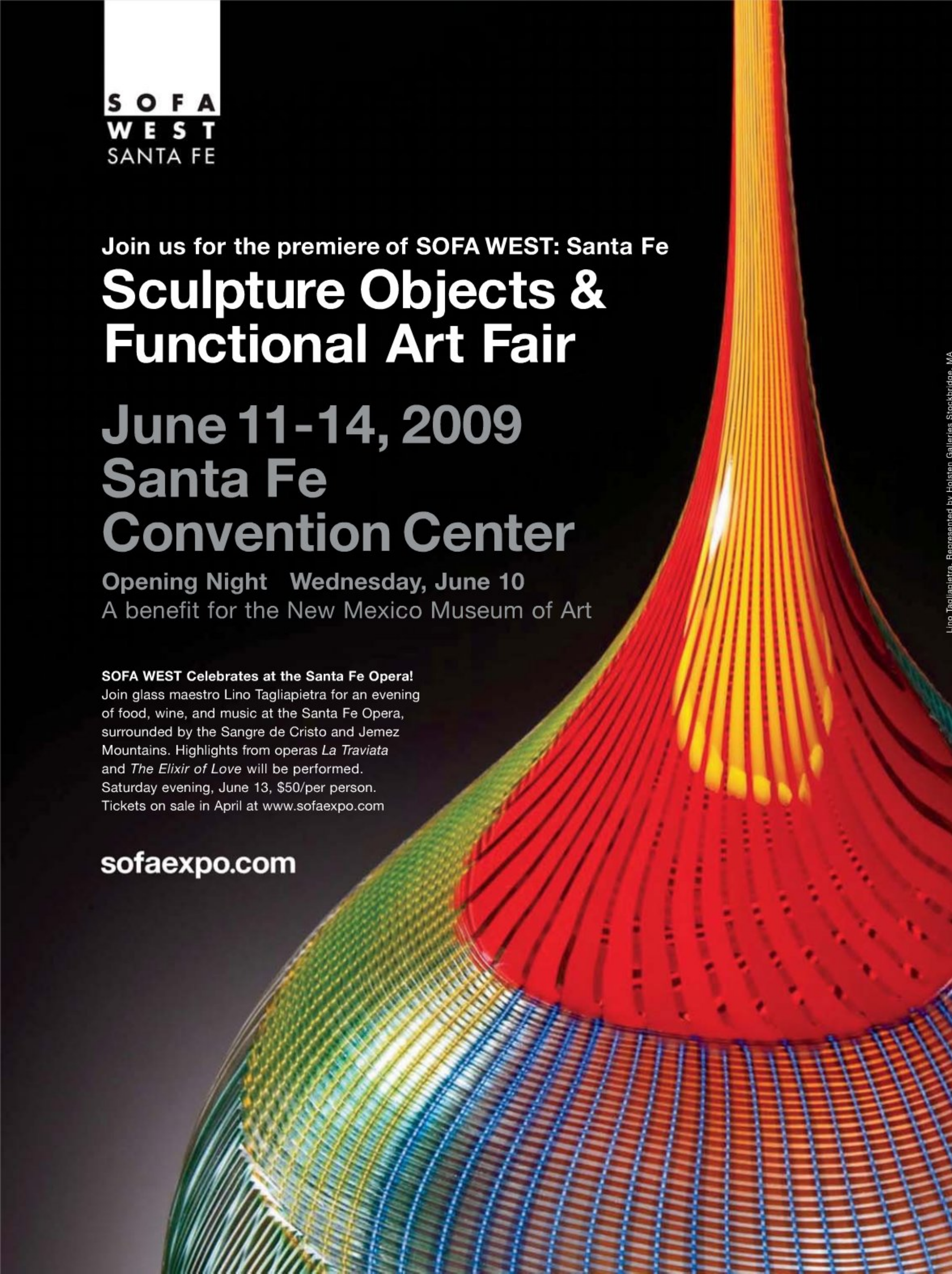
Changes
"It has truly been a labor of love for me," **John I. ("Jack") Russell** said upon his retirement in February after nearly 30 years as executive director of the **Brookfield Craft Center** in Connecticut. His wife, **Judith,** also stepped down as manager of the center's retail gallery. **Richard Herrman** of Ironwood Gallery is interim head until a successor is found… The **Hunter Library** at **Western Carolina University** continues to grow its digital collection documenting the region's craft revival of the early 20th century which includes the work of such basket makers as Lottie Queen Stamper, who made *Storage Basket* ❸, Julia Taylor ❹ and Eva Wolfe ❺. It will soon become "a significant resource for material culture studies," says project director **Anna Fariello.—J.L.**

VA / Virginia Beach
Contemporary Art Center of Virginia:
Hank Murta Adams
to Aug. 23
cacv.org
Raw and direct, Adams's figurative glass busts and wall murals blend the poignant, the horrific and the hilarious.

England / Cambridge
❺ **Cambridge Galleries:**
Reflexivity
July 16–Aug. 29
cambridgegalleries.co.uk
Novel concepts by emerging talents, such as Victoria Scholes's *How It Is,* are highlighted in this juried show of the U.K.'s Contemporary Glass Society.

World Wide Web
Society for Midwest Metalsmiths:
METAL Inclinations International Juried Online Exhibition
to Oct. 31
metalinclinations.org
With just a click, this interactive show transcends brick and mortar, extending the gallery experience to 50 selected metal artists and many viewers.

❺


SOFA
WEST
SANTA FE
Join us for the premiere of SOFA WEST: Santa Fe
Sculpture Objects &
Functional Art Fair
June 11-14, 2009
Santa Fe
Convention Center
Opening Night Wednesday, June 10
A benefit for the New Mexico Museum of Art
SOFA WEST Celebrates at the Santa Fe Opera!
Join glass maestro Lino Tagliapietra for an evening of food, wine, and music at the Santa Fe Opera, surrounded by the Sangre de Cristo and Jemez Mountains. Highlights from operas La Traviata and The Elixir of Love will be performed. Saturday evening, June 13, $50/per person. Tickets on sale in April at www.sofaexpo.com
sofaexpo.com
Lino Tagliapietra, Represented by Holsten Galleries Stockbridge, MA

Handwork (detail) by Sandra Townsend Donabed

Transformations '08: **Icons & Imagery**

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Innovative new work by 32 artists from 9 countries

May 7 – July 27, 2009
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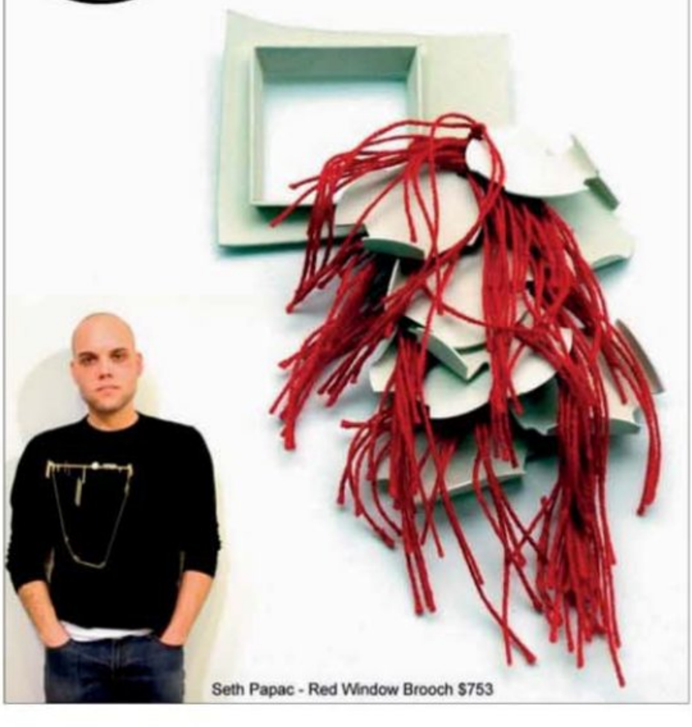

Seth Papac - Red Window Brooch $753

❶

Jun/Jul 09

Council News

Awards and Crowd-pleasers at Baltimore Show

At the American Craft Show in Baltimore, February 27-March 1, Awards of Excellence were presented to Jacob Albee of Burlington, Vermont, Emanuela Duca of New York City, Peter Harrison of Middle Grove, New York, Ani Kasten of Takoma Park, Maryland, Ian Kessler-Gowell of Burnsville, North Carolina and Justin Rothshank, maker of *Lincolnware* and *Mao Platter* ❶, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Outstanding booth design winners were John Dodd of Canandaigua, New York, and Ikuzi Teraki and Jeanne Bisson of Washington, Vermont. Elizabeth Agro, associate curator of American Modern and Contemporary Crafts and Decorative Arts, Philadelphia Museum of Art and Jacqueline T. Copeland, director of Education and Public Programs, the Walters Art Museum, were the jurors. View work by all winners at americancraftmag.org.

This year's Searchlight Artists engaged the crowd with their edgy designs—provocative furniture by Sylvie Rosenthal and large biomorphic metal sculpture by Kai Wolter, to name two.

For the second consecutive year, AltCraft artists, makers who exemplify a snew handmade movement, were juried into the show. From Deborah Cracchiolo's leather slipper moccasins to Josh and Margaret Smith's dishes that combine printmaking and ceramics, imagination ruled.

Best of Show in Atlanta

Awards of Excellence were presented at the American Craft Show Atlanta, March 13-15, to a select few artists: Candiss Cole-Footitt and Roger Footitt of Sedona, Arizona, Robert Farrell of Venice, Florida, and Derek Hennigar of Columbus, North Carolina. Best booth design was awarded to Aaron Hequembourg of Monticello, Georgia. Guest juror was Dinah McClintock, professor of art history at Kennesaw State University. View work by all winners at americancraftmag.org.

AMERICAN CRAFT COUNCIL

CREATING A NEW CRAFT CULTURE

CONFERENCE 2009

October 15–17, 2009
The Radisson Plaza Hotel
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Is craft creating a new culture? The goal of this conference is to investigate the inherent contradictions between craft as a lifestyle and craft as a livelihood. These contradictions are nothing new to craft. For many, making is a meaningful way of life, but the question remains, how can the core values of craft play a role in future marketplace models?

Are we in a crisis? Or in a moment of transition to a new sustainable model that combines lifestyle and livelihood? The whole world is changing – what is craft's role in it? "Creating a New Craft Culture" will seek to pinpoint craft and the handmade in our constantly changing world.

Keynote Presenters /
Dr. Richard Sennett, professor and author, *The Craftsman*
Rob Walker, columnist for the New York Times Magazine and author of *Buying In: The Secret Dialogue Between What We Buy and Who We Are*

Attendees /
Anyone interested and involved in craft. Scholarship support will be available.

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Long a favorite of home crafters, felt has evolved into a thoroughly modern textile adaptable for use in sophisticated home furnishing, fashion and installation art.

Thoroughly Modern Felt

STORY BY
Andrea DiNoto

Smithsonian
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum
Fashioning Felt
March 6 – September 7, 2009
New York, New York
cooperhewitt.org

First you take some raw sheep's wool, lay it out, pound it, spritz it, roll it up, apply pressure and, voilà, you've got felt, the soft, densely matted cloth that may well be the most ancient of man-made textiles. Long a favorite of home crafters, felt has evolved, as this show reveals, into a thoroughly modern textile adaptable for use in sophisticated home furnishing, fashion and installation art. The objects on view vary widely in concept and sensibility, from free-form organic to high-tech industrial design, depending upon the type of felt being used (handmade or manufactured). But whether you're marveling at the glowing "eyes" of LED-embedded felt safety carpeting (designed by Yvonne Laurysen and Erik Mantel for Airbus) or Pernelle Fagerlund's whimsical "textile stones," it's the material's unique warm-soft-fuzzy texture that speaks to you.

The organizers of "Fashioning Felt" understand this and provide a touch wall of samples at the show's end, where you might consider starting your viewing. It is here that several videos demonstrate the arduous process of felting as it is done in factories, craft studios and on the plains of modern-day Mongolia, where the method is thought to have originated, and where felt is used to make wind-resistant yurts, carpets and saddle blankets. The latter technique, which involves the shearing of docile sheep and the use of a compliant camel to drag huge rolls of wool over the stony ground (the bouncing supplies the equivalent of the necessary hand pounding that causes the wool fibers to bond to each other), is far more diverting to watch than automated rollers churning out a smooth, homogenized product by the yard. And yet when you've seen both methods, you're better prepared to appreciate the variety of objects on display.

Because felt is basically a pulp (a textile with no internal structure), it can be industrially produced in a variety of thicknesses—as sheet or padding—or worked by hand into textured decorative panels and patterned carpets, or molded on wooden forms into shaped objects such as hats, or sculpted into pieces such as the aforementioned decorative "stones." Among the show's many revelations is stylish clothing created without stitching of any kind. Françoise Hoffmann, Christine Birkle and Andrea Zittel use felt to make unusual garments, some of which are worn wrapped around the body like saris, while others have been pre-shaped

Opposite top to bottom:
Pernelle Fagerlund
Textile Stones, 2008, felted wool.

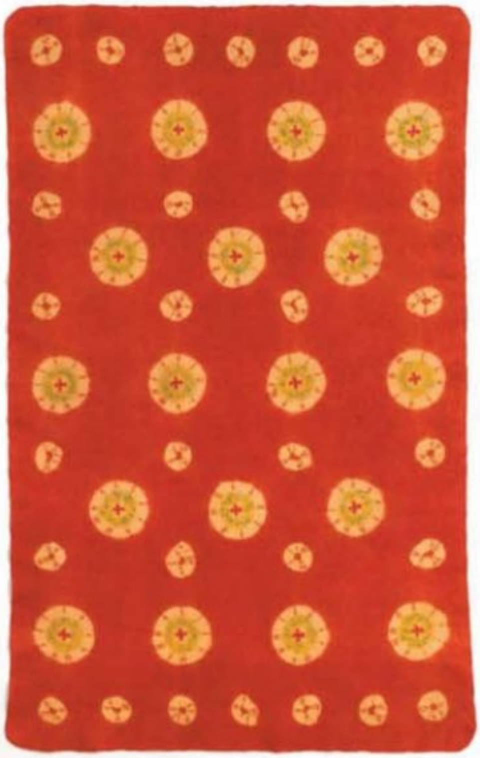
Jorie Johnson
Winged Vessel cup, 2004,wool, bast fibers, leaf, urushi lacquer by Clifton Monteith.

Louise Campbell
Bless You chair, 1999, wool felt, gelatin sheets.

This Page clockwise:
Mosen, Mongolia, late 19th century, felted wool, shibori-dyed.

Claudy Jongstra
Felt walls for the Central Library, Amsterdam, 2007 (detail), Drenthe Heath, Wensleydale and Merino wools, raw silk.

Andrea Zittel
A–Z Fiber Form: White Dress, 2002, felted wool, skirt pins.



on forms. Hoffmann, who designs costumes for theater, uses soft merino-wool-based felt combined with silk mesh, linen or cotton fabrics in a complicated layering technique that results in luxurious textures (resembling flocking and cut velvet) in subtle hand-dyed colors. (The artist explained that the natural shrinking action of the wool—as it becomes felt—is the "glue" that holds the different materials together.)

A similar sort of layering (collaging, really)—but taken to the highest level of complexity and beauty—is to be seen in the multi-textured curved wall installation by the Dutch artist Claudy Jongstra, well-known in Holland for her exquisite hand-felted architectural interiors. Her self-described "landscape of textiles" contains both felted and hand-dyed wool from her own herd of heritage Drenthe Heath sheep. Compare this organic approach to the modernist acoustical walls created by Kathryn Walter for L.A.'s Wosk Theater at the Simon Wiesenthal Museum (shown in the catalog), made from stacked off-cuts of industrial felt, and you understand the material's phenomenal aesthetic range.

The show's glorious centerpiece is Janice Arnold's "palace yurt" installation created in the museum's conservatory. Arnold's translucent off-white, free-hanging panels, which completely cover the 24-foot-high glass walls and cupola, modulate the natural light from outdoors to create a magical, glowing interior. This "yurt" alludes to the traditional Mongolian structure, which is often furnished with colorful felt carpets, of which there is an excellent example, along with a felt dervish hat from Iran, and a late 19th-century tie-dyed tea ceremony rug made in Mongolia for the Japanese market. These antique pieces stand in stark contrast to the show's ultramodern furniture, such as Louise Campbell's Bless You chair of white cut-out felt that resembles an elaborate napkin fold.

The show's most curious objects, by far, are the felt and urushi lacquer vessels (fully functional) made by the team of Jorie Johnson and Clifton Monteith. Fuzzy on the outside, sleek inside, these cups result from the natural bonding that occurs between lacquer and a protein (here wool). But for pure unadulterated feltiness, nothing compares to the white pleated and textured panels designed and made by the Swiss artist Ursula Suter. This is felt for its own sake, teased by hand into exquisite "structures and surfaces" and with no other purpose than to seduce the eye and hand. They do. ✚

The softcover catalog is $35.

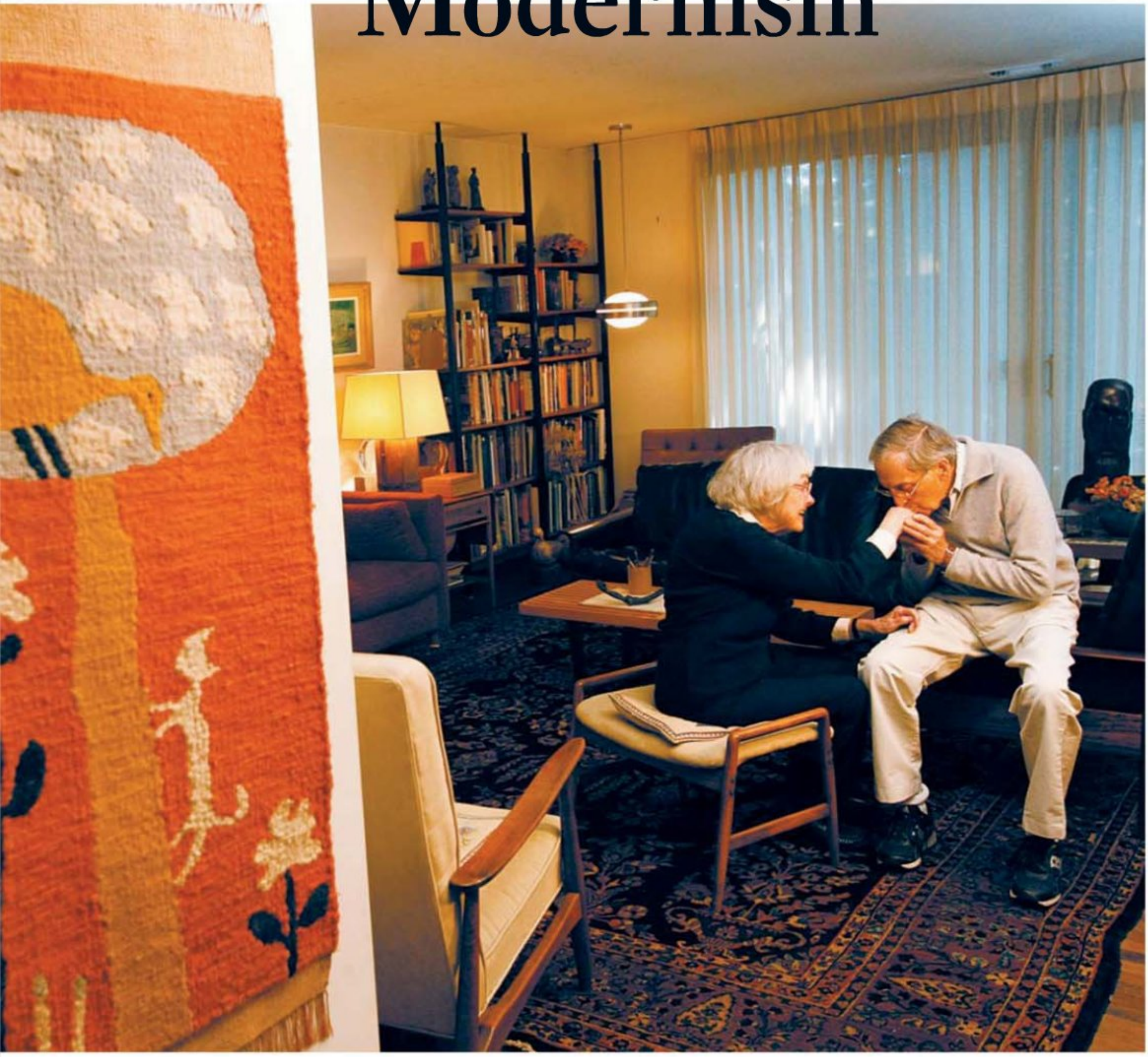
Mosen Photo/ Matt Flynn, Jongstra Photo/Peter Caypers, Zittel Photo/Kentaro Takioka.

STORY BY
Joyce Lovelace

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
Anne Cusack

Masters of Mid-Century California Modernism

Jerome and Evelyn Ackerman in the living room of their Los Angeles home. Opposite: The Ackermans, 1952–54, in their fledgling design studio Jenev, where Jerome produced molded ceramics with Evelyn decorating some of them.



One day in 1949, Evelyn and Jerome Ackerman, young newlywed art students, went to the Detroit Institute of Arts to see "For Modern Living," an exhibition organized by the architect Alexander Girard that surveyed the new wave of postwar design. What they saw dazzled them. "It opened our eyes," Jerome, now 89, remembers. "It was something. There was Eames furniture, V'Soske carpets, Kurt Versen lighting. We walked through all that and just said, wow." Here, for their generation, was a fresh and exciting›

A Timeline of the Life and Work of Evelyn and Jerome Ackerman

1920
Jerome Ackerman is born in Detroit, Michigan.

1924
Evelyn Ackerman is born Evelyn Lipton in Detroit, Michigan. Jerome and Evelyn live only six blocks apart and attend the same high school, but their disparity in age means they do not know each other growing up.

1939–1941
In Detroit, Jerome begins studies at Wayne University (now Wayne State) as an art major.

1941
Evelyn enters the University of Michigan as an art major.

1941–43
When the United States enters World War II, Jerome leaves university, works briefly for a naval ordnance plant then joins the Air Force, serving in Germany.
+
Evelyn transfers to Wayne University as a fine arts and art history major to be closer to her mother after her father's death.

1945
Evelyn receives a Bachelor of Fine Arts (with distinction) and continues in graduate school at Wayne University on a scholarship.

1946
Jerome, discharged from the military, spends six months in Los Angeles and falls in love with the climate, but decides to return to famly and friends in Detroit.

1948
Evelyn and Jerome meet at her sister-in-law's studio, Lucé Lipton Interior Designs where Evelyn works part time; they begin dating and quickly fall in love. On September 12, 1948 the couple marry.

Vintage Photos/1,3,4 Milton Lipton, 2 Bob Buckman.

1949
While visiting Jerome's parents on the West Coast they meet Beatrice Wood and Gertrud and Otto Natzler. They also meet John Follis who, with Rex Goode, designed a series of ceramic planters and sold their plans to Rita and Max Lawrence of Architectural Pottery. All become lifelong friends.
+
Later that year, the exhibition For Modern Living, organized by architect Alexander Girard at the Detroit Institute of Arts, exposes Evelyn and Jerome to the work of innovative contemporary designers, among them Ray and Charles Eames, opening their eyes to the possibility of careers combining their design and fine arts training.
+
Jerome's ceramics are shown in local and national exhibitions (1949, 1950 and 1951)

1950–1951
Evelyn completes Master of Arts in Fine Art. Jerome completes undergraduate work at Wayne University with the addition of an art teaching credential.
+
Invited by Chairman Charles Harder, Jerome enters Alfred University's prestigious New York College of Ceramics.

1952
Jerome graduates with a Master of Fine Arts in ceramics.
+
Evelyn and Jerome decide to establish their careers in California and settle in Los Angeles opening a small space on Federal Avenue. They call their fledgling collaboration, Jenev Design Studio, a combination of their first names.

1953
Jerome spends one year developing his first group of molded ceramics 01 utilizing skills from Alfred University; Evelyn decorates some of them.
Photo/Steve Oliver.

The eclectic group of objects in the Ackermans' home includes an antique tricycle, an Ibo mask from Nigeria and a 19th-century dollhouse on a Danish modern table.

alternative to the "mundane, what-your-mother-had, doilies-on-a-table" kind of traditional home decor. "We didn't know we had missed it, because it hadn't been there. But when it became available, we realized–hey, there's something a step above, or different, that answers something here," Jerome says, touching his heart.

"For Modern Living" prompted the Ackermans to drive to the Herman Miller showroom in Grand Rapids and buy, for their first apartment, a George Nelson bench, two Alvar Aalto stools, and a lounge chair and dining table by the husband-and-wife team Charles and Ray Eames. More important, the show gave them a vision for their future.

"Evvy and I looked at each other," recalls Jerome, "and very prophetically said, 'If the Eameses can do it, maybe we can do it. Or at least, we can try.'"

Sixty years later, the Ackermans are themselves the subjects of a wide-ranging and deeply inspiring exhibition, "Masters of Mid-Century California Modernism," on view through January 2010 at the Mingei International Museum in San Diego. Curated by Jo Lauria and Dale Carolyn Gluckman, this first retrospective celebrates the couple's career as designers of home furnishings and their role in the development of California Modern style. "We realized how 'under the radar' their work has been, how underrecognized they are by all except specialists in the craft/design field," the curators explain. "We wanted to put them in the spotlight, and make their work visible to a wider population of art and design enthusiasts who

01

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would appreciate them and come to truly understand their contribution to the field."

There is a warmth and authenticity to Ackerman ceramics, tapestries, mosaics and wood carvings, perhaps because they designed for people like themselves, who were on a budget yet wanted to live with beautiful, well-made things. They believed in the Bauhaus philosophy of combining fine art, craft and industry to produce quality goods, and strove to make, as Jerome says, "things we could be proud of in terms of our design and art backgrounds, but that were viable commercially, that people could afford and get pleasure from putting on their walls or their tables."

At the heart of their collaboration is a love story. Both Jerome Ackerman and Evelyn Lipton grew up artistically inclined in hardworking, middle-class families in Depression-era Detroit. They attended all the same schools, but since Evelyn was four years younger, didn't meet until 1948, when Jerome, home from Air Corps service in Germany, walked into an interior design store and saw "an extremely lovely young lady sitting and folding fabrics." He introduced himself and offered her a candy bar. "Pretty sophisticated opening, wouldn't you say?" he jokes. "As fate would have it, Evelyn happened to like Milky Ways."

They quickly went from smitten to serious. "I felt I'd met someone who was solid," Jerome says. Evelyn was sensitive and scholarly, an introvert who loved to immerse herself in drawing, painting and the study of art history. "I guess I'm a person who, at least at›

1954–1955
First sale of Jenev ceramics to Jules Seltzer, owner of a prominent Los Angeles-based showroom for modernist furniture.
+
Evelyn, inspired by a contemporary mosaic panel in an exhibition, works with Jerry to design and produce mosaic panels and tables, such as the the unglazed porcelain and glass tile Cats Mosaic Table 02.
Photo/Steve Oliver.
+
Evelyn designs a series of mosaics with symbols of Swiss cantons for Mammoth Mountain Inn; Paul Palmer, designer.

1956
Forming a partnership with Jerome's former classmate, architect Sherrill Broudy, Jenev becomes ERA Industries.

1957
Evelyn's first tapestry design, Hot Bird, is produced in Mexico by skilled weavers.

1958
The Table Top Candle Holder and Wall-Mounted Candle Holder 03 are part of a group of porcelain enameled metal wall sconces and candle holders designed by Jerome.
Photos/Steve Oliver.
+
Evelyn becomes interested in the silk screening process and produces a series of designs on various materials; her first is the Kites 04 Wall Hanging on wool felt. Photo/Steve Oliver.

1959
Evelyn designs the brass with vermillion agate inlay Horses Door Pulls and the brass with black mother-of-pearl inlay King and Queen Door Pulls 05.
Photo/Steve Oliver.
+
Evelyn designs and Jerome produces their initial group of carved wood bas-relief wall panels, the first of which is the walnut St. George and the Dragon 06.
Photo/Steve Oliver.

1984–85
Evelyn creates 40-piece series of cloisonné enamels 13, detail, Stories from the Bible, donated to the Renwick Gallery, National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.

1990s
Jerome, semi-retired, produces one-of-a-kind ceramic pieces and participates in numerous exhibitions.

1994
Evelyn and Jerome are included among a select group honored as Legends of Design during West Week, Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles.

2000–2001
Made in California: Art, Image and Identity, 1900–2000, Los Angeles County Museum of Art; California Pottery: Mission to Modernism, Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco.

2005
Their work is included in the book *California Design: The Legacy of West Coast Craft and Style* by Jo Lauria and Suzanne Baizerman.

2007–08
Jerome continues to produce ceramics such as the glazed stoneware See No Evil 14 and Teapot with Figures 15.
+
September 12: The couple celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary.
+
September 13: They are honored with the Henry Award by the Museum of California Design for their contribution to mid-century California design.

2009
Evelyn and Jerome Ackerman, organized by the Museum of California Design, Palm Springs Modernism Show, February; Masters of Mid-Century California Modernism: Evelyn and Jerome Ackerman, organized by Mingei International Museum, San Diego, California.

View full timeline at americancraftmag.org.

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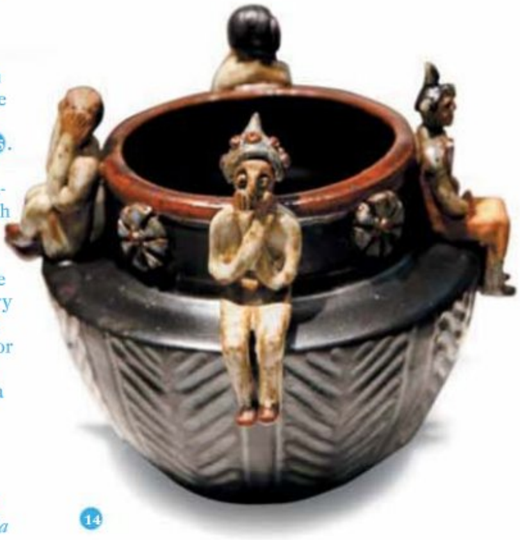

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"What she had was unique." As her creativity bloomed, so did ERA's product line. Their cross-disciplinary approach was unusual for designer-craftsmen, but "Evvy and I always had a great curiosity about materials," Jerome says. "We wanted to stretch. We enjoyed the exploration."

Their career flourished with the postwar housing boom in the Golden State, led by developers such as Joseph Eichler, who designed vast communities in the modernist style. (Shortly after they came west, the Ackermans met Eichler and he assured them, "I'll be building enough homes that if you sell a pot to everybody who buys one, you'll be okay.") Ackerman furnishings lent warmth, texture and a very California palette of highly saturated colors to these interior spaces.

"Jerry and Evelyn were in the right place at the right time, producing work that was extremely well designed and ideal for these clean-lined modern interiors," observes Bill Stern, director of the Museum of California Design, adding, "Theirs is the kind of modernism that has not become dated. It's still fresh." "The work is timeless," concurs Gerard O'Brien, owner of Reform Gallery in L.A., which specializes in California Modern. Young collectors, O'Brien says, have taken to the work of the Ackermans, drawn to its whimsy, playfulness and strong sense of narrative and character, as well as to their personal story, "the life they built for themselves, the idea of them being a team, together and sharing, and caring how they went about their craft."

Left: The Ackermans look at one of Evelyn's tapestry illustations. Right: Evelyn collects antique toys, including this Moritz Gottschalk dollhouse.

Through the 1950s, 60s and 70s, the Ackermans successfully sold to the contract furnishings and interior design markets, maintaining their showroom on Beverly Boulevard (it later moved to the Pacific Design Center), while attracting critical notice in important museum shows of the day (including the famous "California Design" series at the Pasadena Art Museum). Their partnership was a harmonious blend of complementary talents and temperaments; Jerome was the "idea guy" and salesman, while Evelyn was happiest behind the scenes, in the studio. "How many couples can work together and last? Not many," she observes. "If I couldn't do something, he did it. If he couldn't do it, I did." Along with raising their daughter, Laura, born in 1960, "we just worked, all the time. It's what we wanted to do." They stopped manufacturing in 1979, after which Jerome continued to sell ERA products along with quality lines by others. Evelyn went on to write scholarly books on antique dolls and dollhouses (her collecting passion) and devoted almost two years to creating her masterpiece, a series of 40 exquisite cloisonné enamel tiles, each telling an Old Testament story, now in the collection of the Renwick Gallery (and a highlight of the Mingei show). In the 1990s Jerome returned to ceramics, making updated editions of Jenev designs from original molds, as well as unique hand-thrown pieces shown at galleries and museums.

These days the Ackermans are gratified, in their modest fashion, to see a new generation discover and appreciate their work. They're tickled when their pieces, increasingly collectible, pop up on eBay. In a way, the Mingei retrospective has given this endearing couple a chance to rediscover themselves. "You look at [an old piece] and say, 'Oh my, did I do that?'" Evelyn marvels. "And I say, 'Yes, Evelyn, you did that, and you were pretty damn good,'" Jerome affirms fondly. Looking back on their achievement, he reflects, "We did it our way, to quote Sinatra. We did. We didn't have any help. We didn't have much money. But we had a dream." ✚

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"We did it our way, to quote Sinatra. We did. We didn't have any help. We didn't have much money. But we had a dream." —Jerome Ackerman

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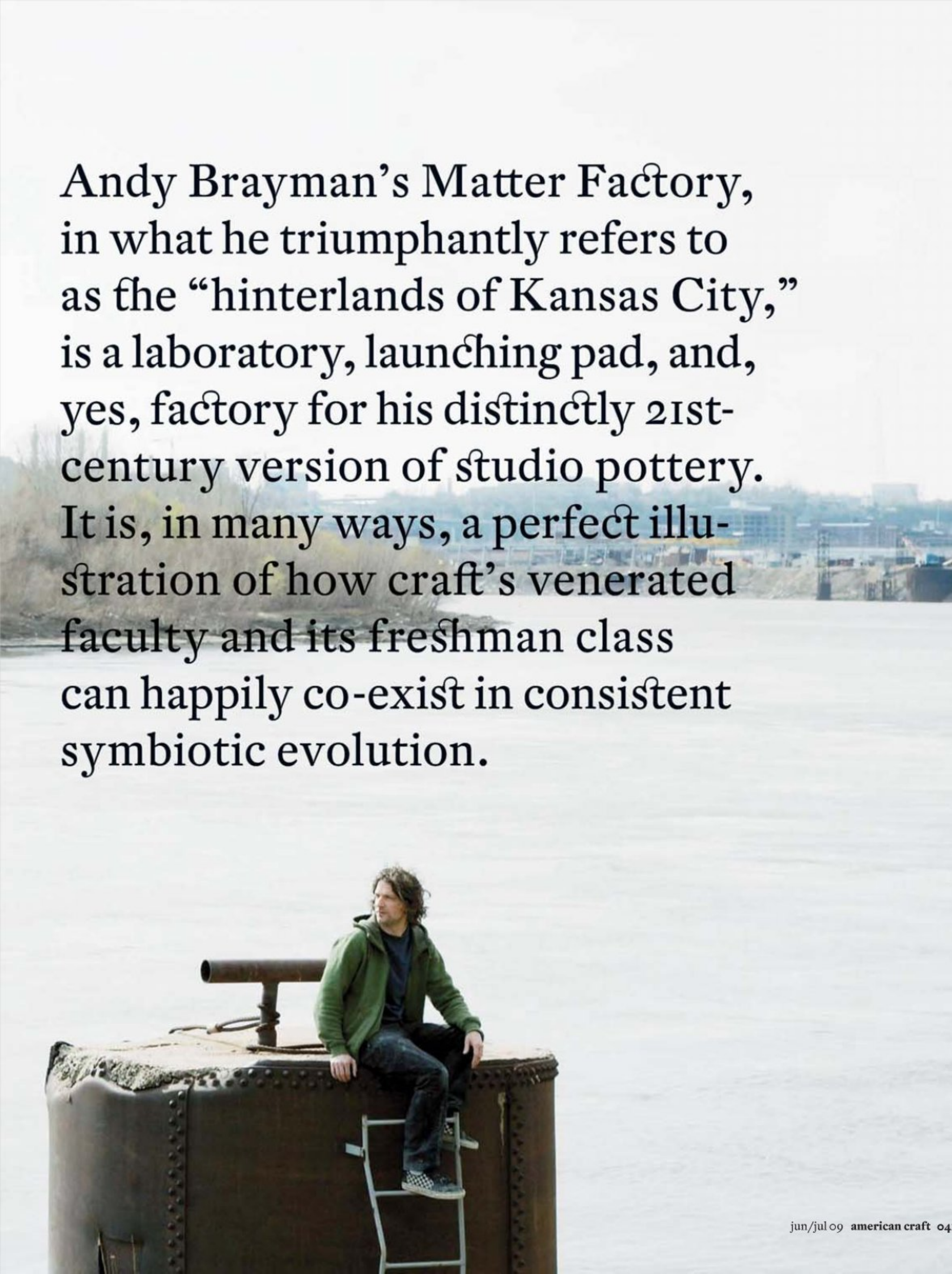
STORY BY
Lily Kane

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
Brady Fontenot

Making the Most of the Margins

From his Kansas City studio, located in a former farmer's market along the banks of the converging Missouri and Kaw Rivers, potter Andy Brayman designs pieces that bring together beauty and function.

Andy Brayman's Matter Factory, in what he triumphantly refers to as the "hinterlands of Kansas City," is a laboratory, launching pad, and, yes, factory for his distinctly 21st-century version of studio pottery. It is, in many ways, a perfect illustration of how craft's venerated faculty and its freshman class can happily co-exist in consistent symbiotic evolution.



With the imminent closing of his secondary and more commercial business, Easy Ceramic Decals, Brayman's Matter Factory is on the brink of reinvention and renaissance.

After teaching stints in New York and at Bennington College in Vermont, Brayman settled in Kansas City, Kansas, and in 2005 set up his businesses in a former farmer's market from the 1930s that sits, as his website notes, "at the confluence of the Missouri River and the Kaw River." Brayman, who almost obsessively harvests inspiration from his surroundings, invested part of his honorarium from speaking on the "New Artists/New Work" panel at the American Craft Council's 2006 "Shaping the Future of Craft" conference in the purchase of a 1956 Alumacraft boat for better exploring these neighboring rivers.

From this huge space, a square footage definition of Midwest breathing room, Brayman founded the Matter Factory and Easy Ceramic Decals. "I wanted to start the decal business to be the democratic will-print-anything-for-anybody model, totally commercial," he explains, "And the Matter Factory would be more curated, less commercial." The decal business took off and became what Brayman refers to as "the sugar daddy" for the Matter Factory. "Even if I'd had a ton of money to begin with, I wouldn't have known what to do with it. I learned a lot by printing everything–from cool projects for artists to memorial plaques for dogs who've died." Thanks to this democratic array of jobs, Brayman was able to build up a collection of equipment that will allow him to produce his own work at a high technically professional level.

Brayman doesn't eschew commercial leanings, but he does eschew stagnancy. His main goal is to keep himself nimble creatively. "Easy Ceramic Decals is going strong so I'm shutting it down. I just changed the message on the machine today. I feel like I got away with something, but it stopped feeling creative so I became less interested in doing it."

Brayman's ultimate stand on functionality is a marriage of common sense and prankster plotting.

In his own craft, Brayman describes his predominant working model as that of a studio potter. "My background is different than a designer's. I start as a potter. So, I start with serial production and in a way I still go by the model I learned in school: you create a body of work, there's a critique, then you create a new body of work."

He also has unerring comic timing and a wry ironic incantation regarding the ever-present debates about the theory and politics of craft. Asked if the error message that greets anyone following the "theory" link on his Matter Factory website is an intentionally comic statement about his interest in theory, Brayman laughs, "No, but that's a great idea."

After an education in ceramics that includes a B.F.A. from the University of Kansas and an M.F.A. from Alfred University–a sort of Ivy League for pottery–Brayman casually peppers conversations with references spanning centuries of ceramic history to contemporary craft-design hybrids like Droog. In a *Ceramics Monthly* essay he recently published, "The New Factory," his future-favored appeal–"As a field, we are particularly good at time travel, but really only in one direction. . . . We can, and should, start to look forward–further and more often than we do"–was carefully backed up by an erudite summary of the prevailing perception of the potter and his studio and the possibilities presented by the 21st century.

In establishing his own studio, Brayman confesses that he developed a "spiel" about making functional pottery. "I don't want to say I'm devoted to it because I'm not afraid to do other work, but it is ▸

Above: Creating functional objects such as this porcelain bowl appeals to Brayman because he can surprise people. "People aren't expecting much from a dinner plate," he says.

Opposite: Brayman working on the main floor of the Matter Factory with a low-tech rendering machine of his own design.

This page: An array of dishes that are currently in progress.

Opposite: The mold for Brayman's Change Dish is made with coins he found in his studio.

"I like working with functional objects because people aren't expecting much from a dinner plate. You can sneak something in. But if you screw with it too much, it won't be used. It's more interesting to me that these pieces get used." —Andy Brayman

important. And I find the constraints tolerable, even inspiring."

His ultimate stand on functionality is a marriage of common sense and prankster plotting–"I like working with functional objects because people aren't expecting much from a dinner plate. You can sneak something in. But if you screw with it too much it won't be used. It's more interesting to me that these pieces get used."

He is careful to point out his disinterest in over-romanticizing the idea that an object's beauty emerges from everyday use, believing that beauty is something the maker brings to the piece. "The functional work I make fits into two broad categories. In the first, the concept behind it is beauty. It has to work, of course, and you experience the beauty through function. In the second, I still want it to be beautiful but there's an additional concept that drives it, like humor or underlying statements that are more specific than its being about pattern, for instance."

Two of Brayman's best-known pieces have emerged from this second category. His Gold-Lined Cup with Concealed Decoration, for instance, has to be used to "work." These porcelain cups bear text concealed beneath a 23k gold glaze. Described by Brayman as "kind of like a lottery ticket," the piece toys with the fate fine china often meets in a dishwasher where the hot water causes the luster to fade. In this case, you have to use and abuse the piece for the gold to wear away and reveal the text. For functional pieces of this ilk that rely on user interaction, Brayman allows, "it can get confusing wondering when the piece is done."

With Change Dish–probably his biggest production run to date of a single idea, with 30 or 40 produced so far–Brayman inverts the vessel concept, using the objects you would place in it as the exterior architecture. In this case the mold is made using the coins found lying around his studio. In the eight-inch-diameter version, the piece sells for $45.71, the same amount used to create the mold.

Although these two pieces have been successes by all accounts, Brayman is aware of the fine line between making a statement or joke with a piece and having it retain its value as a functional object. "I don't want to make cups with text about Darfur. Not that Darfur's not important, but once you put that text on an object it overshadows the function. It becomes a statement, a piece of art."

With more time on his hands to devote to the Matter Factory Brayman is excited about developing new ideas and expanding his collaborations. He worked with Ayumi Horie on a series exhibited at New York's Greenwich House Pottery in May 2009. He is also collaborating with Walter Ostrom, "a champion of decoration with expansive knowledge of this history." They will be crossing national borders to produce a set of plates, with Brayman executing the first stage at the Matter Factory in Kansas City and then sending them to Nova Scotia to be decorated by Ostrom.

Another intriguing upcoming project involves what Brayman calls a "tornado machine." He is taking brick and cinder block fragments from the town of Greensburg, Kansas, destroyed in 2007 by a tornado, and putting them in a simple centrifuge machine that turns things to dust "using only spinning air in a metal cone." He is using the dust made from these construction fragments into glazes for pieces that will ultimately go back to Greensburg.

Brayman will also continue to work with his friend Allegheny Meadows to help bring Meadows's Artstream trailer to craft events to sell pottery made by Brayman, Meadows, Horie, Christa Assad (profiled in American Craft, October/November 2008) and others.

This project, a vintage Airstream trailer converted into a ▸

“Even if I’d had a ton of money to begin with, I wouldn’t have known what to do with it. I learned a lot by printing everything—from cool projects for artists to memorial plaques for dogs who’ve died.” —Andy Brayman

peripatetic pop-up shop, is part commune, part rock-star tour bus–at the 2007 National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) conference in Louisville, the trailer was mobbed and the potters manning the door had to do double duty as bouncers, letting people in one or two at a time when someone exited.

After explaining that he decided to drive to meet the Artstream at the 2009 NCECA conference in Phoenix so that he could take advantage of the wealth of skate parks in the Southwest, Brayman, a longtime skater, considers the parallels between the sport and learning pottery. Assessing the urban landscape for benches, rails, curbs and pipes to land tricks on teaches you to look at the innate form of objects differently. Skating and craft are also both learned through repetition. “You have to suffer,” Brayman laughs. “You have to learn, practice and try to find a way to keep having fun.

Although he is leaving himself open to experiment and explore new projects as he turns solely to working from the Matter Factory, Brayman has a specific idea in mind for the bigger picture of how he wants his company to run. “I don’t want to be a small production company where I design a line each year for the ICFF and have the pieces made in-house. I’m interested in figuring out my own model.” Making the most of the margins he relishes, Brayman has no designs on becoming trendy. “I like that craft and function are sort of outside the ‘upper echelon.’ There’s a lot of freedom in that.” Focused on his more creative Matter Factory, that freedom should prove fruitful for Brayman’s studio craft. ✚

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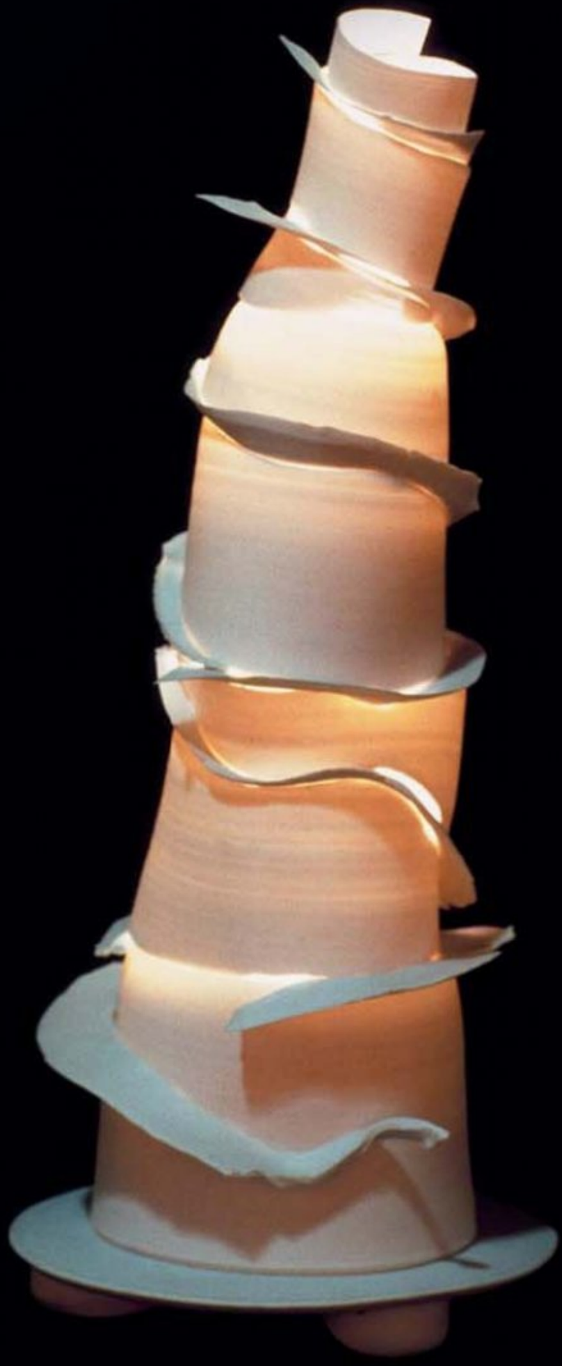
Left: A collection of plates that Brayman collaborated on with Walter Ostrom. They were sent to Ostrom to be decorated by hand.

Opposite: Brayman’s cups with hidden decorations must be used to “work.” Hot water fades the glaze, revealing concealed text.

DRESDEN IMPROVED
PLATE DIVIDER
BEGIN HERE
BEGIN AT THIS LINE

STORY BY
Robert Silberman

Let There Be Lighting



Margaret O'Rorke's *Tower,* 1997, freestanding light sculpture, thrown, cut, re-formed and joined translucent porcelain {h. 27 in.}. Photo/Al Crane.

Margaret O'Rorke is a woman on a mission. Goethe's famous dying words were "More light!" The British ceramic artist, however, is determined to bring not only more light, but more lighting to the world. "The light that comes from translucent porcelain is magic," O'Rorke has said, and she is convinced that special quality of light creates an enhanced quality of life. The only thing necessary is a manufacturer willing to step forward to help her realize her dream of creating affordable porcelain lighting.

"By putting the light inside and making the clay translucent, you're putting the touch of your hand into the work. It's the sensitivity and touch of the hand that you see in the light."
—Margaret O'Rorke

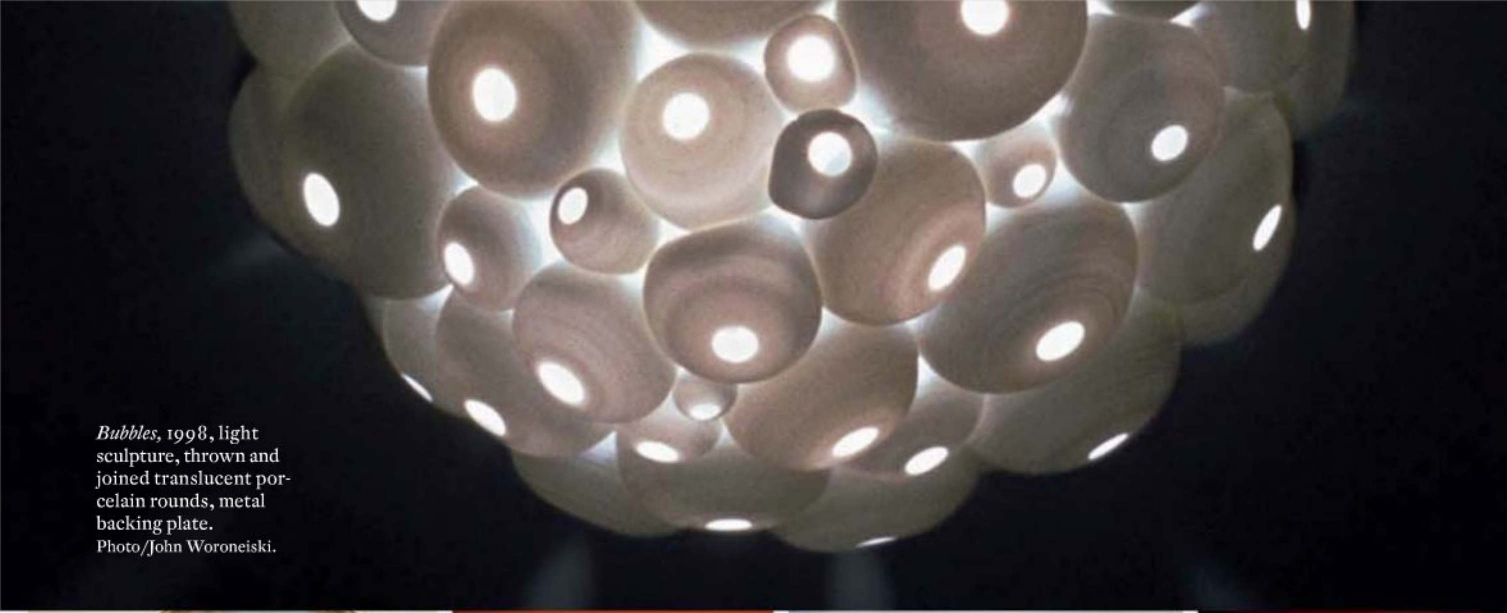
Opposite page left to right: Early tableware, 1981, thrown, low-fired stoneware, green copper glaze.
Photo/Michael Fontes.

Porcelain teapot, 1982, thrown, reduced in glass kiln. Shown in Winchester College East Gallery, 1983.
Photo/Michael Fontes.

Early thrown porcelain lamp, 1983, shows both reduction and oxidation firing.

Lidded translucent porcelain light vessel, 1992, made in Ryoji Koie's studio in Japan.

Above, clockwise from top left: O'Rorke kneading porcelain in her studio in Oxford, England, 2007. Translucent porcelain light form, 1989, thrown, re-formed and fluted. Creating the fluted pattern in porcelain, 1989. In Sanbao, China, thrown porcelain form cut with a wire, 2008. Wire-cut clay form, 2008, produced at Shanxi Xianglong Black Pottery Handicraft Co., Ltd. in China. O'Rorke and her assistant with form cut with a wire and re-formed.



Bubbles, 1998, light sculpture, thrown and joined translucent porcelain rounds, metal backing plate.
Photo/John Woroneiski.

O'Rorke trained as a functional potter, and insists that she is a "thrower" whose turn to mold-making is a result of her quest for a solution to the problem of mass production. She is wary of the word "designer." Yet she believes studio artists have a lot to offer industry. "Because we think in a different way and have a close relationship with the material, we can break down barriers and create something inspired that can be manufactured."

After getting a degree in painting, O'Rorke studied ceramics and was fortunate enough to be in the first class taught by Lucie Rie at the Camberwell School of Art in London. O'Rorke expresses bewilderment as to why the formidable Ms. Rie–who surveyed the entire output of the class and responded with "These are terrible!"–said to her later "If you need help, come see me." The teacher presumably recognized the commitment and talent of the student. In any case, when O'Rorke returned to ceramics after a 20-year hiatus during which she raised a family and helped run a hotel and restaurant with her then-husband, a chef, it was to Rie that she turned for an all-important judgment.

After O'Rorke took up ceramics again she was successful making functional pottery: "I could do everything a potter was supposed to do: make lids fit, make big things, make little things, and I did it, and I sold it." Yet after a few years she became restless, and was unnerved by Rie's response to her work in a gallery show: "Never make anything just because you think it will sell." She loved porcelain from the minute she put her hands to it, and one day, holding up a bowl to show a painter friend how lovely the translucence of porcelain was, she was struck by a question, "Why don't I put a light inside?" But that would be ceramic sacrilege: "A vessel is a container, and when you put a hole in it, it no longer contains." Full of apprehension, showing Rie her new vase form containing a light, she asked if it's acceptable to turn a vase into a lamp. After a long pause, the answer came: "Margaret, why not?"

From then on, O'Rorke says, "I never looked back." She developed a new approach that involved cutting, re-forming and then joining the thrown elements. The artist has worked ever since to develop a variety of what she calls "freestanding light sculptures"–not lamps–with impressive results that combine the traditional and the modern with lyricism, boldness, ingenuity and a beauty that reveals O'Rorke's own form of magic.

It is customary to distinguish between functional and nonfunctional ceramics, between basic tableware or other utilitarian objects, and sculpture. O'Rorke's light sculptures are generally–but not always–intended as supplementary sources of light, not as the principal light in a room or the basic lighting for activities such as reading. Their role is more psychological and aesthetic, affecting a space in subtle ways. Like Isamu Noguchi's Akari lights, O'Rorke's creations participate in what Noguchi described as "the sculpture of spaces." O'Rorke is a great admirer of Noguchi, and is also well aware of ›

Like Isamu Noguchi's Akari lights, O'Rorke's creations participate in what Noguchi described as "the sculpture of spaces."

Far left and bottom: O'Rorke at the wheel at the Sanbao International Ceramic Art Institute. Photos/Liqiang, an assistant.

Left: Drying a thrown model with a fierce paraffin torch at Shanzi Xianglong Black Pottery Handicraft Co.

Above left to right: Light and water sculpture, 1995, thrown translucent porcelain rims, cut, joined, fired. Photo/Arnold Borgerth.

Light sculpture, 1995, thrown translucent porcelain bands, cut, joined, fired, steel base. Photo/Arnold Borgerth.

Light sculpture, 1997, thrown translucent porcelain, shown in Perth Potters Club, Western Australia, 1997.

Wings, 1999, light sculpture, 15 thrown translucent porcelain wings threaded onto steel rods. Photo/John Woroneiski.

Prototype for slip-cast porcelain ceiling or wall light, 1999. Developed in a residency at Wades Ceramics factory.
Photo/Colin Hall.

Rudolf Staffel, but notes that his porcelain creations are usually lit from without, not from within. "My work is exactly the opposite," she says. "The light goes out from it, and there really is no surface."

O'Rorke realizes she must accommodate modern life and light, meaning electricity. Yet she always returns to the unmatched warmth of candlelight as the standard to which she aspires, because of the way it calms people and draws them together. Put simply, "It makes you feel good." A key episode in her move to concentrate on lighting was an invitation to participate in a 1987 exhibition, "Making Light Work," at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford. There O'Rorke was able to study the objects in the collection, representing virtually the entire history of human lighting, and then create her own stoneware homage to archaic lamps using olive oil and plaited cotton wicks.

The subtle variations in hand-thrown porcelain, according to O'Rorke, lead to a rich, non-mechanical illumination: "Because I'm a potter, it's all about touch. By putting the light inside and making the clay translucent, you're putting the touch of your hand into the work. It's the sensitivity and touch of the hand that you see in the light." During a residency in 1999 at Wades Ceramics at Stoke-on-Trent, O'Rorke learned how to make molds. She created thrown models that retained the vitality of throwing, and at the same time was helped by Valentine Clay in the development of a slip notable for its translucency, which she continues to use today.

Each new lighting sculpture poses a challenge for O'Rorke, beyond the creation of the porcelain form. There is the lighting technology to be incorporated, including bulbs, wiring and switches; and there is also the hardware necessary for mounting the work on the wall or hanging it from the ceiling, or the base that must be created if it is for a table. Yet for O'Rorke any frustration caused by the need to meet these technical requirements is matched by excitement over the possibilities that may soon be realized: "I want to use the latest technology to design a work where the whole wall lights up."

O'Rorke has developed an astonishing range of light sculptures: hand-carved tabletop models; complex multi-unit works that build upon joined, overlapping bands that show the fluidity of her throwing and her sculptural imagination; wall units that use rows of thin strips of porcelain or multiple disks, backlit by light boxes; suspended pods or gently curving wall fixtures that reveal a fascination with forms derived from nature; and great circular arrangements of what appear as individual flower petals, combined into a ceramic equivalent to a stained glass rose window.

One especially ambitious project stands out as a model of enterprise, both individual and commercial. In 2006 O'Rorke was invited to create a lighting installation for the staircase space of the Royal Copenhagen showroom in Copenhagen. Working at the factory with support from company personnel, she was able to re-form a Royal ›

Left to right: Installing *Big Wheel,* 2001, wall sculpture (detail), 28 thrown translucent wings mounted on metal back plate.
Photos/ James Grabbe (left) and Gilles le Corre.

Left to right: *Vertical Pods,* 2000, thrown translucent forms suspended from 12-volt track system.
Photo/Gilles le Corre.

Translucent porcelain wall disks, 2002, commission for Louis Poulson showroom, Copenhagen, Denmark.
Photo/B. Ryberg.

Royal Copenhagen light, 2006, cast translucent porcelain, one of 60 installed in the company showroom.
Photo/James Crabbe.

Bamboo lit water feature, 2008, cast and stacked translucent porcelain elements, built at Sanbao International Ceramic Institute.

Copenhagen solid vase mold to produce an original translucent light form. Each form was sliced into three sections, neatly removing any trace of the seams created by the molds. Hardware was devised that would inconspicuously hold the sections together and support the electrical elements. Since the lighting was for a staircase void–the stairs had been removed, but an open balcony remained on the second floor–the 60 suspended cast porcelain units could be seen from both above and below. O'Rorke's installation occupies the architectural space with a striking display of light and sculptural form, and appropriately showcases Royal Copenhagen's creative spirit–and hers as well.

Given O'Rorke's devotion to porcelain, it is fitting that she's accepted several invitations to work at Sanbao International Ceramic Art Institute outside Jingdzhen, the "Porcelain City" in China. Her most recent visit to the historical home of porcelain resulted in a magnificent fountain, or in the parlance, "architectural water feature." In 1995 O'Rorke created a water feature-sculpture in England that was essentially a stack of rounded vessel forms; it evolved from three months at Ryoji Koie's studio in Japan in 1992, where, inspired by Koie's free spirit, she worked with a local clay that also helped "free her up." O'Rorke created the Jingdzhen fountain through a different process. Her assistant laboriously slip-cast fine porcelain from molds of sections of bamboo. She then built a giant stack of crisscrossed elements. When water enters the picture, the technical problems become even more complicated, but O'Rorke has mastered pumps and plumbing. One side benefit of the fountain project has been the creation of multiple small lighting units made from the casts of individual sections of bamboo, which were about to be thrown out. These lights, suitable for table or wall use, suggest both rudimentary ancient lamps and minimalist contemporary design, and offer another demonstration of O'Rorke's ability to blend traditionalism and modernity.

In spite of the exhausting aspects of her chosen pursuit, with all its endless trial-and-error, O'Rorke perseveres. She says of commercial production, "It's always going to be expensive, because it's always going to be crafted." Yet she retains her hope, after several near misses, that a sympathetic manufacturer will appear in spite of the economic downturn. After all, she notes, "I have proved that it is possible to make things that could only be dreamed of." She is clearly a determined person who does not stop before she has taken an idea to a satisfactory conclusion, as when she says, "Why am I pursuing these impossible ideas? Because I want to demonstrate what can be done. It's the quality that the porcelain gives to light that drives me. I can't resist exploring the possibilities. One day I may feel I've done my light thing.... But I'm not quite done yet." +

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Horizontal Pod, 1999, light sculpture, thrown translucent porcelain suspended from 12-volt track system. Photo/Sebastian Hedgeco.

"Why am I pursuing these impossible ideas? Because I want to demonstrate what could be done. It's the quality that the porcelain gives to light that drives me."
—Margaret O'Rorke

Architects at Play with Glass

The popularity of glass in buildings has allowed designers to manipulate it inventively and personally with visceral results, encouraging manufacturers to produce more varieties of glass so that architects can keep expanding their palettes.

ESSAY BY
Jayne Merkel

The dramatic glass buildings sprouting throughout New York and other intensely developed cities are enabling architects to explore the material the way sculptors and glass artists do. Color, shape, pattern, various types of transparency and reflectivity are being used to enliven facades, provide protection from the sun and make visual connections with nearby buildings. Walking down a street can resemble a trip through a gallery or a shop selling hand-blown glassware. The sheets of glass being used in walls may come from factories but they are assembled on site. And although installation requires teams of hands, the popularity of the material has allowed designers to manipulate it inventively and personally with visceral results, encouraging manufacturers to produce more varieties of glass so that architects can keep expanding their palettes.

Glass first became popular with modern architects as a transparent material to contrast with solid industrial-looking structural frames, as in the pristine geometric buildings of, for example, Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe, which became ubiquitous in the mid-20th century. But the idea of using glass expressively goes back to Mies's Romantic sculpturesque unbuilt skyscrapers for Berlin of the early 1920s, according to Cesar Pelli, who started the recent trend with two brightly colored, dramatically shaped glass buildings in Los Angeles of the early 1970s—the transparent Century City Medical Center and the shiny but opaque Pacific Design Center (the "Blue Whale").

FIGURE 1
The IAC Building by Frank Gehry in New York City's Chelsea art district.

Only in the last few years, however, has glass been explored by a number of architects for a wide variety of effects. Probably the most dramatic in New York is Frank Gehry's wave-like, white glass, eight-story headquarters for Barry Diller's IAC (InterActiveCorp) media on the West Side Highway in the Chelsea art gallery district [FIGURE 1]. It looks

white because its clear glass walls are covered with tiny white sun-shading dots called frits. They create an opaque surface toward the ceilings and floors, where they are densely spaced, but disperse at eye level to provide more transparency. The building was intended to resemble a sail, since both the architect and client love the sea, but it looks more like an iceberg. Still, it is stunning, and the curvaceous facades create workstations inside with unusual character. Since the walls are composed of glass sandwich panels with 1,150 different curvatures, the panels were created on-site by "cold-warping," an economical but labor-intensive technique in which the three panes in each unit are bent as they are inserted into their extruded aluminum frames just before they are installed. (Surprisingly, glass can bend four or five inches.) Two panes are laminated together, the third is separated by an air space, and they are all held in place by silicone seals. Additional sun protection for the glass skin is provided by 1,400 sun-blocking MechoShades, twisted as much as 30 degrees to fit the curvatures.

Twenty-three blocks south, the French architect Jean Nouvel designed a 13-story, 40-unit residential condominium to fit into, rather than stand out from, the cast iron SoHo Historic District that surrounds it [FIGURE 2]. The glass and steel building at 40 Mercer Street, occupying an entire half block along Grand Street between Broadway and Mercer, is rigidly rectangular instead of sculptural. It relates to its 19th-century neighbors in a classically modern way. The architect used strips of red glass and blue glass to create an almost Mondrian-like pattern on some exterior walls. The sheets of glass are held in place by steel frames that are almost black on the lower floors but light gray on those that rise above their neighbors, where the building steps back, so they blend into the sky. Some glass is completely transparent, some is practically opaque, but, as Nouvel has said, "depending on the time of day, the building changes. From a massive object with sharp contours, it tends towards dematerialization, the frontiers between inside and outside melt away." From the outside, the colored glass looks very dark blue or maroon, but on the inside, with sun pouring in, it looks bright blue or red in the bands that edge the ceilings. Nouvel likes the fact that "this play on the glass between appearance and disappearance of matter lends an erotic character to the architecture." But it is a subtle, contextual eroticism—something you notice only when you really study the building very closely.

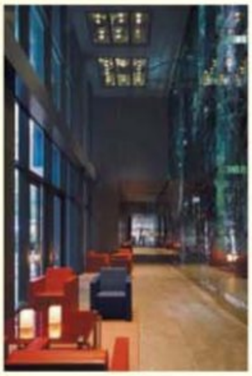

FIGURE 2
40 Mercer Street by Jean Nouvel in the SoHo Historic District.

There is nothing subtle about Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron's 40 Bond Street, about a mile to the northeast in NoHo [FIGURE 3]. The 11-story building which contains five "townhouses" on the lower floors and 22 ›

FIGURE 3
40 Bond Street by Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron in NoHo.

Bond St. Photos/Iwan Baan, Mercer St. Photos/Roland Halbe.

loft-style apartments upstairs, is located on a cobblestone block with several new condominiums and one of the most elegant 19th-century cast iron structures in New York. It has large windows and classically detailed exterior structural columns painted off-white. Herzog and de Meuron acknowledge this other building by creating a curvaceous structural frame of their own and pushing it to the exterior, where it follows the grid of the floor-to-ceiling window bays. This introduces depth to the facade on the exterior and frees the interior from freestanding columns. The structural grid is made of concrete, not metal, and instead of paint, it is sheathed in gently curved light green glass that wraps around protruding floor slabs and columns. Although the skeleton of the building is expressed, it sometimes appears to melt into the surface of the window bays and dissolve in a play of translucency, light and reflection. The building has a greenish tint because of the color of the glass, which is affected by the light, viewing angle, thickness and layering. Although the façade is the most unusual aspect of the building, it is upstaged by a squiggly cast aluminum gate running along the sidewalk, acting both as a physical barrier and a visual screen. The gate is a collage of graffiti tags, which have been translated into the third dimension with the help of a computer–a rather ironic touch in a structure with multimillion dollar apartments.

FIGURE 4
Chelsea Modern by Audrey Matlock on West 18th Street.

In Chelsea, a block east of the IAC building, Audrey Matlock used the glass wall itself to create a sense of depth and a colorful presence in a 12-story condominium on West 18th Street [FIGURE 4]. In the 47-unit Chelsea Modern, sections of wall two-or-three stories tall project outward to form triangles, providing a variety of views from the interior and a wave-like pattern on the façade, evocative of the Hudson River nearby. Additional depth is provided by operable windows in each room that "pop" out–literally extend forward parallel to the outer wall surface, instead of moving up and down like a double-hung window or rolling forward at an angle the way casement windows do. The first examples of the German-made system in the United States (which were actually fabricated here), they extend out only as far as New York City windows are legally allowed to, but they admit air on all four sides, providing unusual ventilation and additional depth to the façade from both inside and out. The glass in the exterior walls also varies in color from a rich deep blue, to silver, to white, to almost clear transparent glass, creating a syncopated pattern. Getting the intense coloration right was not easy, since the budget did not allow for an on-site mock-up, like the one Matlock had when she designed the patterned blue glass Bertlesman Building at 1540 Broadway as a young associate at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill in the 1980s. But she did a lot of experimenting and was able to come up with intense blue transparent glass for some of the lower and upper walls. (The central sections where the operable windows are located are clear, or almost clear, glass.) Unlike many glass-walled buildings, which are sheathed in a combination of transparent and spandrel glass, all the walls on the Chelsea Modern's façade are transparent. So, despite the pattern, from the inside the building seems completely open to the outside, something Matlock thinks is important in a city where "we live in incredibly cramped quarters." She likes the fact that "glass expands your world." This building also expands into a backyard and underground. Like 40 Bond

Street, it has two-story units on the ground level and, only these extend below ground, so heavy translucent channel glass is embedded into the sidewalk to bring additional light into underground spaces.

Almost five miles uptown at Barnard College, Marion Weiss and Michael Manfredi are using various shades and types of terra-cotta colored glass in the new wedge-shaped Nexus Arts Building (scheduled for com-

FIGURE 5
Renderings of the Nexus Arts Building at Barnard College by Marion Weiss and Michael Manfredi.

pletion by 2010) to relate to brick buildings nearby while offering views in and out [FIGURE 5]. Some glass panels are opaque; others are triple-paned transparent glass with terra-cotta colored translucent frits on the inside pane. A series of double-height spaces on the east side overlook the Columbia campus across Broadway. On the west side, an enclosed fire stair zigzags across the façade of the building that bridges a 14-foot gap between one end of the Barnard campus and the other. The stair creates a new vertical path through the small outdoor space, where there is also a series of new grass terraces. Inside, a broad staircase linking a series of double-height atria brings natural light into the core of the seven-story structure and encourages casual interaction. These "slipped atria" carve a diagonal void through the building. The staircase, which connects art and architecture studios, dance and theater spaces, a gallery, library, 24-hour café and hall that accommodates 500 people, has double-paned glass walls with translucent frits that are offset from one another, so they appear to shift as you ascend. Since some art spaces require solid walls, a number of exterior panels are made of insulated opaque terra-cotta-colored spandrel glass which makes the building unusually energy efficient.

Although glass naturally has a green tint, it is not a particularly "green" material in a location like New York with wide swings in temperature. It admits natural light but is a poor insulator, though manufacturers have been developing glasses with better ability to reflect sunlight and more insulative properties along with various colors, transparencies and other appealing qualities. For contemporary standards of energy efficiency, a glass building should have no more than 40 percent of its surface covered with transparent or translucent glass, but solid-colored spandrel glass can be as thoroughly insulated as any other material, and a mid-block building can have heavily insulated side and rear walls. Sound reflection can present another problem in a glass building, as does the need to incorporate window-washing equipment. And though glass-walled interiors seem expansive, small spaces with glass walls can be hard to use since there is no place to hang pictures or put bookcases; even the placement of furniture can be a challenge. But, developers say, for many buyers the "wow" factor of a floor-to-ceiling view makes it all worthwhile. ✦

Photos/Weiss Manfredi.

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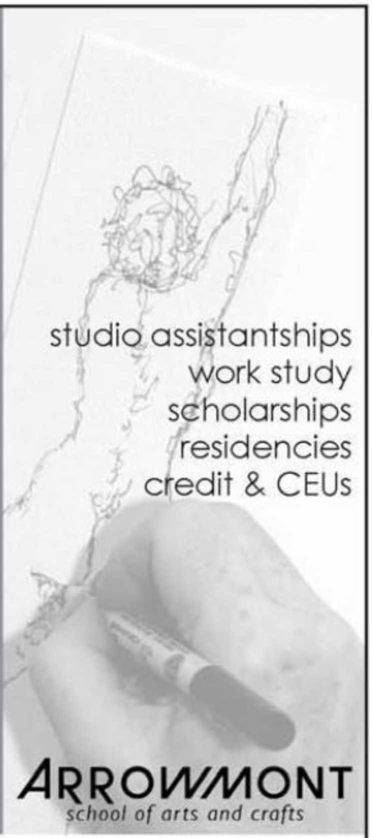

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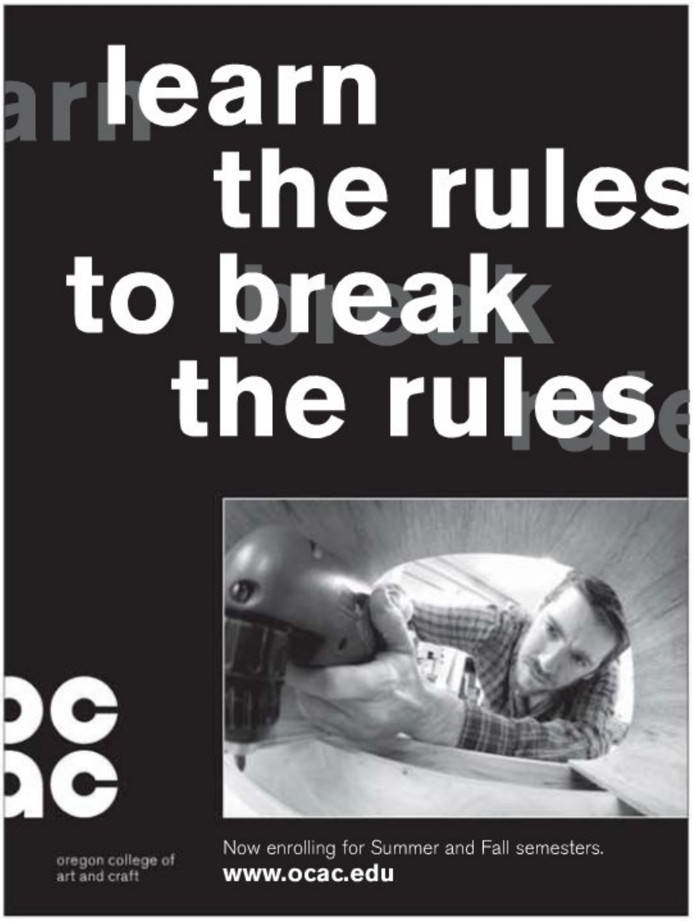
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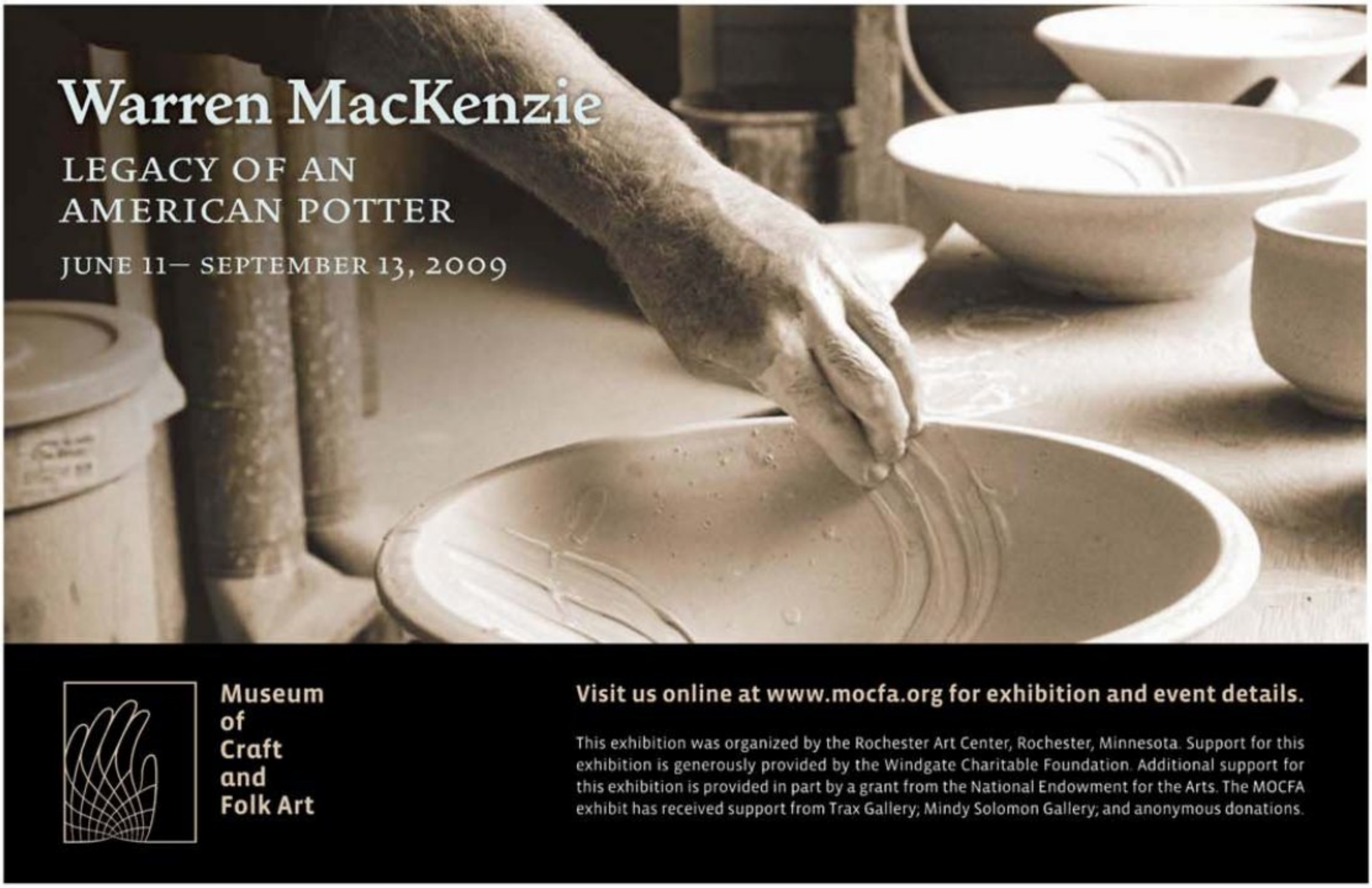
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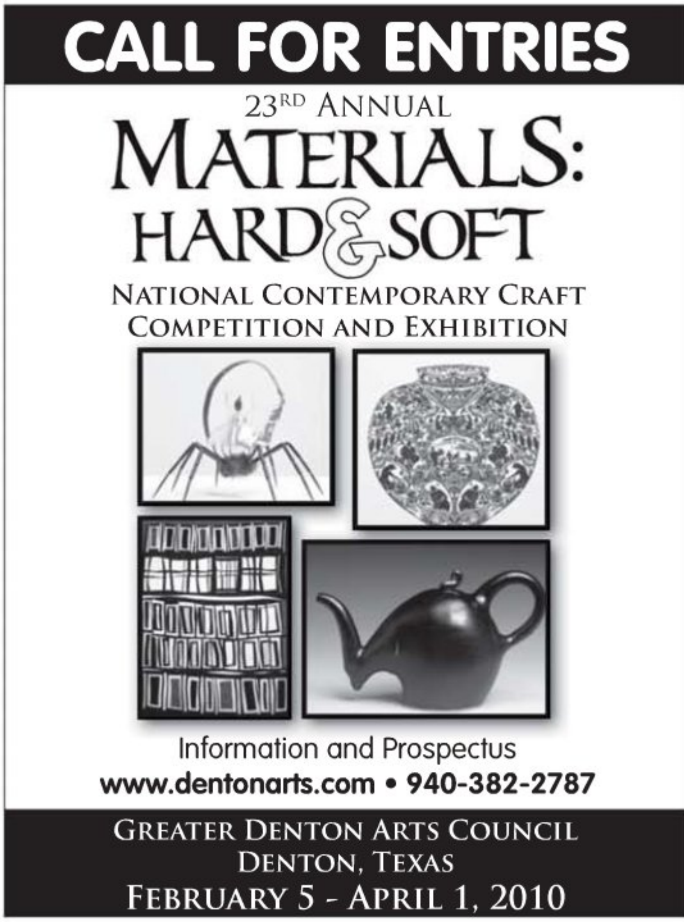


San Antonio, Texas: Remember the Arts!

STORY BY
Shannon Sharpe

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
Misty Keasler

Explore San Antonio! Visit americancraftmag.org for even more information and photos. Click on our Wide World of Craft interactive map to find recommended places to visit, shop, eat and play!

"I have a theory that ranchers' daughters have art in their blood from looking at the Texas horizon line for so many years," says Bettie Ward, a fiber artist and the "cowgirl daughter of an old-world rancher." That may be true of ranchers' sons as well, or simply native Texans across the board. And if you're looking to find these artists in the Lone Star State, your best bet may be to head to San Antonio, where Ward lives in an eclectic house that is an art showcase in itself. Like her embroidered work, Ward's home in the Irish Flats section of the city is both sensual and intense, filled with bright colors and soft fabrics. As if to confirm how San Antonians' lives and art intermingle, the home and studio of Franco Mondini-Ruiz, a mixed-media artist (and former lawyer who gave up his career to pursue his true passion) are another sensory experience filled with his bold paintings, storytelling paper "cakes" and ironically kitschy pieces created with found objects. "There's a tradition here called 'rasquache,' which has to do with working with what you have," explains Mondini-Ruiz. "This attitude permeates the local aesthetic."

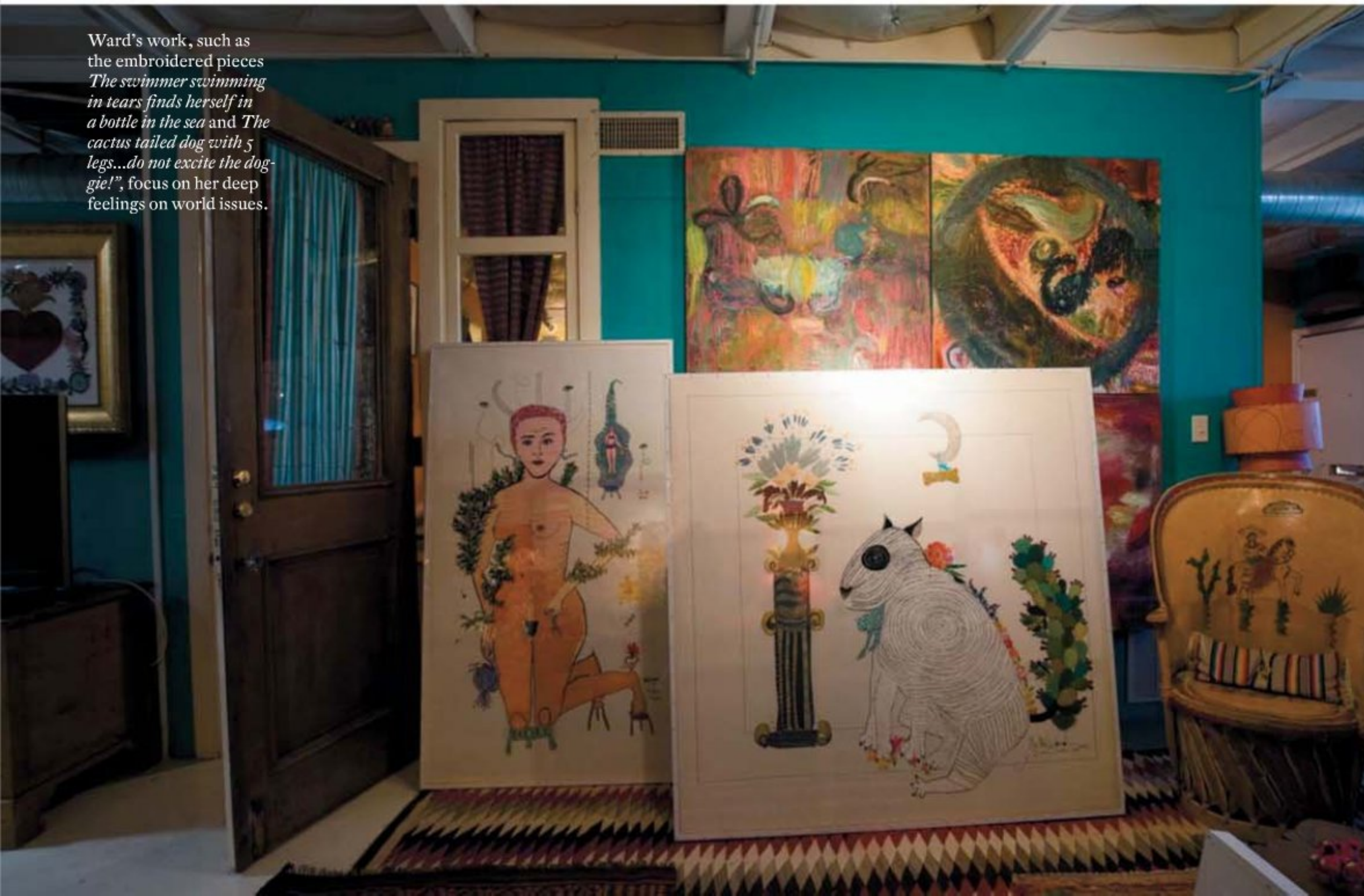
But it is not just those born and raised in the city who find San Antonio such a good place for artists. Some discovered the appeal much later in life, such as Lucia LaVilla-Havelin, a fiber artist originally from Rochester, New York. She found San Antonio to be the perfect place to pursue her craft—needlepoint, embroidery and beading that explores science and nature. "Moving to San Antonio and having access to amazingly beautiful places has given me a relationship to nature that I never felt before," LaVilla-Havelin says. Compounding this thrill was the thriving fiber community she discovered. "I told all my friends still in the northeast that I had died and gone to fiber heaven!"

"San Antonio has attracted people from all over the world," observes Ovidio Giberga, a ceramist and assistant professor at the University of Texas at San Antonio who moved to the city from Miami after spending her childhood in Madrid, Spain, and Bogota, Colombia. "It provides a rich mix of cultural influences. Unlike many newer large cities, San Antonio has preserved many of its older buildings and capitalizes on its cultural heritage."

It's not surprising that so many artists are drawn to the city. There have been›

Whether exploring the soon-to-be expanded River Walk, reflecting upon history at the Alamo or absorbing the culture, curiousity seekers have much to see and do in San Antonio.

Bettie Ward and her dog Romi sit in her colorful San Antonio home, decorated with much of her own art such as the stone canterra head *Nopalescana*.



Ward's work, such as the embroidered pieces *The swimmer swimming in tears finds herself in a bottle in the sea* and *The cactus tailed dog with 5 legs...do not excite the doggie!"*, focus on her deep feelings on world issues.

"Unlike many newer large cities, San Antonio has preserved many of its older buildings and capitalizes on its cultural heritage." —Ovidio Giberga

Top: At San Angel Folk Art wedding figurines by Zezinha, a bird by Peter Grieve, figures by the Aguilar sisters and a mermaid by Shane Campbell relay the spirit of folk traditions.

Above: *Landforms* by Lucia LaVilla-Havelins. The fiber artist fell in love with San Antonio after moving there from back east. "I told my friends I had died and gone to fiber heaven!"

major happenings in the art scene the past few decades, one of the first being the development of the Blue Star Arts Complex in the mid-1980s. This former warehouse is home to a few dozen galleries, retail spaces and studios, including San Angel Folk Art, Joan Grona Gallery, and Blue Star Contemporary Art Center, which also offers youth education such as the Mosaic Art program run by local artist Alex Rubio.

Continuing this movement was the founding, in 1995, of Artpace a contemporary art institution started by Linda Pace, a collector and businesswoman, in an effort to educate the public on contemporary art and the artistic process, and provide opportunities for artists. Widely recognized for its international artist-in-residence program, it has become a cornerstone of the San Antonio art scene.

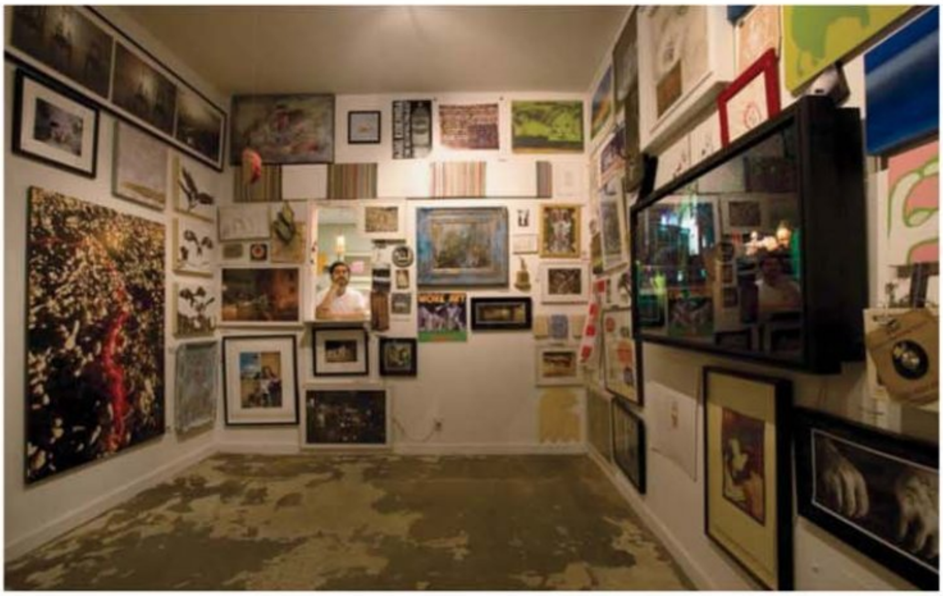
Andy Benavides, an artist, designer, gallery owner and arts advocate, can also be credited with some of the recent advancements. He pioneered the First Fridays and Second Saturdays art walks in Southtown, San Antonio's art district. He is also founder and president of S.M.A.R.T. (Supporting Multiple Arts Resources Together), a foundation dedicated to raising awareness of the arts through youth education programs, contests and the S.M.A.R.T. Fair, which provides a day of free workshops. Benavides is passionate about promoting art in San Antonio. He grew up in the city but left temporarily for school and work. Upon his return he began to explore the city's many possibilities. "After experiencing this pool of creative opportunities, I wanted to share San Antonio's creative potential with the youth in the city," Benavides says.

Now there is even more of an opportunity to experience this pulse of creativity with Luminaria, an annual arts festival that began in 2008. For this celebration of art, music, dance, literature and theater, the city closes off the streets downtown and residents and tourists alike pour in. Even on this year's March night, when the temperature›

Mixed media artist Franco Mondini-Ruiz has embraced the idea of art being a part of every aspect of his life, including his backyard.

Mondini-Ruiz has a huge fan base for his eclectic pieces. Buyers range from locals to New York socialites.

"After experiencing this pool of creative opportunities I wanted to share San Antonio's creative potential with the youth in the city." —Andy Benavides



Top: *Country Wave* was a site-specific installation by Anne Ferrer at Blue Star Contemporary Art Center, one of the many exciting local galleries.

Above: Andy Benavides stands in Flight Gallery, one of the galleries in his 1906 arts complex. Flight represents over 50 artists from throughout San Antonio.

dropped to the 40s, weather the locals are definitely not used to, a crowd of 150,000 filled the streets.

While these fantastic events are part of what keeps art in San Antonio up-to-the minute, there is also a strong cultural history. One of the most famous examples, of course, is the River Walk. The two-and-a-half mile stretch of landscaped waterfront along the San Antonio River, created to be reminiscent of Venice, Italy, is lined with galleries, restaurants and shops. The River Walk was first built in the 1920s, but it wasn't until the 1960s that it became a major attraction. The River Walk is now becoming even more important as the San Antonio River Foundation proceeds to expand another 13 miles, an extension that will provide an abundance of public art.

San Antonio has also always had fervent arts supporters. The McNay Art Museum, which was built in the 1920s and opened as a museum in 1954, is the former home of Marion Koogler McNay, one of San Antonio's most well-known modern art collectors. Another important advocate, Margaret Pace Wilson, was part of a group of women who founded the Southwest School of Art & Craft. "San Antonio's current artistic vibrancy is, at least in part, the result of the Southwest School and the thousands of people who have studied, honed, learned to appreciate or celebrated the arts here over the past 44 years," observes Paula Owen, the president of the school. "It was one of the things that drew me to San Antonio," adds Giberga. "The Southwest School is a great asset."

Put together this history with the current redevelopment and the increasingly supportive community, and it becomes quite obvious that this Southwestern city seems to be skyrocketing toward becoming a major cultural center. "San Antonio is unlike any other city in its unbridled enthusiasm for art," says Ward. "It is just about to blossom into one of the most beautiful cities in the United States." ✚

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Tucked away on the sixth floor of 72 Spring Street in New York City is the American Craft Council library, one of the largest collections in this country of craft, art and design books documenting the studio craft movement from the 1940s to the present. The over 14,000 volumes include the Council's 67-year publishing history—all past issues of *Craft Horizons* and American Craft. We'd like to share some of this amazing past as we dig through the stacks. If you happen to be in the city, come in and say hello—the library is open to the public.

Maloof... Designer, Craftsman of Furniture

STORY BY
Christine Kaminsky

When Sherley Ashton wrote about Sam Maloof, now 93, in the June 1954 *Craft Horizons*, the master woodworker's career had just begun. Even then he approached woodworking with the conviction that the designer and maker are inseparable. Notable for its elegant functionality, his work has been widely exhibited and was the subject of a retrospective at the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery and is in its permanent collection as well as in those of many other museums.

Among the first to join the American Craft Council's newly created College of Fellows, in 1975, Maloof was selected by his peers to receive the Council's Gold Medal in 1988. He was the first craftsman to be awarded a MacArthur Foundation fellowship, in 1985. His legacy is assured with the Sam and Alfreda Maloof Foundation for the Arts and Crafts, which Maloof founded, with his first wife, the late Alfreda, in 1994. The Foundation is part of a sprawling compound in Alta Loma, California, where Maloof lives with his second wife, Beverly. It encompasses the original house he built in 1954—now a national historic landmark—stunning newer buildings, lush gardens and woodshops where he continues to work.

Maloof recently completed three new designs, all of which are on view until July 2 in a solo exhibition of his work at the Riverside Art Museum. He has often insisted that "no matter how beautiful a chair is, if it is not comfortable, it is not a good chair." Presidents Carter, Reagan and Clinton have all owned his signature rockers and who better to recognize an ideal way to relax than leaders with the weight of the world on their shoulders? President Obama, is there a Maloof chair in your future? ✚

To read the entire *Craft Horizons* article, visit us at americancraftmag.org.

Gerry Newcomb

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